FRONTIER
AND ITS
GANDHI

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PREFACE

THE N.-W. F. PROVINCE OF INDIA presents one of the most fascinating problems to-day. It is interesting alike to the soldier and the statesman, the poet and the patriot, the Government and the governed. It is a feverish battle-ground for the activities of Congressites and Jinnahites, the Communists *versus* the Capitalists, the Allies against the Axis. Sir William Barton reminds us that German propaganda is responsible for undermining the British programme of peaceful penetration. It has been aptly stated that "The North-West Frontier is not only the frontier of India; it is an international frontier of the first importance from the military point of view for the whole Empire."

The aim of the author in this book is to attempt a dispassionate study of the Himalayan problems that hedge around the Frontier. No side has been taken in the idealogical conflict. I have steered clear of all propagandist ideas. It is as much a scientific study as is possible under the circumstances. A little drizzle of lovelinesses sprinkled hither and thither may be easily understood, because the author is studying a province where he was born and bred up. And blood is always thicker than water!

J. S. B.

LAHORE:
June 15, 1944.

"I can strongly recommend a study...... of the North-West Frontier Province, of the characteristics of the people both in the Tribal areas and the Settled district."

—THE MARQUESS OF WILLINGDON.

CONTENTS

First Part

Second Part

CHAPTER I

THE FERTILE FRONTIER

THE NORTH-WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE of India is one of the richest valleys on surface of the globe. It is a most fertile tract of rosy soil, covering 40,000 square miles in area. Upon the map, it looks like a giant lizzard on the shoulder of India. Geographically the Frontier is an amputated limb of Afghanistan. The vast majority of population is Pathan on both sides of the Durand Line, which divides Afghanistan from India. From Indus to Kabul is homeland of the Pushto-speaking tribes. And before the Frontier Gandhi carried the torch of nationalism among the Pathans, they had as much love for India as the British for the Germans.

A huge mountain mass buttresses the Afghan highlands for several hundred miles. It is held by a hardy race. Hard and high-handed. As rude and ruthless as the mountain peaks and precipices. Here is the one *great Imperial land frontier of Britain.* Now and then war-clouds gather on the Afghan horizon. And then the Mistress of the Seas is reminded tragically of her doings and duties. The defence of the Afghan borderland is an Imperial concern. " The North-West Frontier," said the Simon Commission, "is not only the Frontier of India ; it is an international frontier of the first importance from the military point of view for the whole Empire."

The Frontier is the southernmost part of the great central Asian tableland. This is the breeding ground of warlike races. Races that have conquered the globe

through the centuries. Possessed themselves of the earth from Lahore to London. They have pushed the weaker tribes from pillar to post, from dales to deserts. From the Pamirs southwards the tableland is flanked on the east by a tangle of lofty mountains. This mountainous wall is pierced by a few rough and tough passes, sentinelled by everlasting snow. Through these gateways of nature, the sweeping tides of invaders found their path. The eastern mountain belt is the homeland of the hardiest of the Pathan group of tribes. It is very difficult to bring these hill clans within the pale of law. The Durand Line is the Indo-Afghan boundary. It was settled in 1894 by agreement between Kabul and Delhi. Shorn of the Indus Valley and its mountainous hinterland, the Afghan Government nurses a perpetual grudge against the British. Not only that. The country is landlocked as a result of the British appropriation of the maritime province of Baluchistan. In the words of the great Amir Abdur Rahman it pointed a pistol at the heart of Afghanistan.

The Frontier Province extends to the Suleiman mountains and the Gumal Pass in the south. To Chitral and the Pamirs on the north. The Kashmir State is the eastern boundary. The width of this strip of territory averages fifty miles. It has a million first-class fighting men. British influence so far has done little to curb the wild freedom of the hills. The origin of the tribes is doubtful. Legend connects them with the lost tribes of Israel. They will not transmute the hilly independence into ordered democracy. Nevertheless, the tribes are democratic in the tenderest sense of the word. Among them equality rules supreme. Even though they have no government, they observe the letter and the spirit of their code of honour. The Pathans have

a deep affinity with Afghanistan. "Here it may be observed," says Sir William Barton, "that there is among the Muslims of the Panjab a tendency to support a scheme for a separate Muslim State in the north to be styled Pakistan (the land of the pure in heart), which would include most of the Panjab, the Frontier Province and Kashmir, whose population is predominantly Muslim. If such a State were formed it is more than likely that in the end it would be united to Afghanistan."*

Nearly half the Indian army is cantoned along the Frontier. Not as a protection against Russian or Afghan invasion. It is just there to hold in check three or four hundred thousand fighting men of the border hills. Thus India is spending fifteen millions a year on border police work. The Frontier problem is now an Imperial problem of the first magnitude.

The ethnic pattern in the Frontier presents a bewildering variety. Before the dawn of history, wave after wave of tribes poured through the tribes. This inflow of human material never ceased in the Frontier. Dravidians, Indo-Aryans, Huns, Scythians, Turks, Mongols, Afghans, Mughals chased one another. There was a slow infiltration of Afghan tribes into the Indus Valley. Most of these Afghan passes were nomads. Even now they migrate to the low country in the winter. This movement swept from Chitral to Gumal right up to the foothills on the west. The Mohmands and the Yusafzai conquered Bajaur, Dir, Swat, Buner and the western slopes of the Black Mountain. They drove the Swati tribes across the Indus to the eastern slopes of the ridge. These were mostly unwarlike Buddhists.

**India's North-West Frontier*, p. 13.

The North-West Frontier is more west than north. It is over 1,000 miles in length and marches with Afghanistan and Persia. Such a sweep and range means unlimited occasion for incident and romance. The Frontier is a thing of yesterday, because India once marched on the Oxus. In very modern times it extended as far as the Hindu Kush. The romance in the Khyber Pass is full of love and lust amid

" The flying bullet down the pass
That whistles shrill all flesh is grass."

Long the home of the Buddhists, it is now the hunting ground of the Afridis. The Pass is full of the strange relics of the past, such as a broken idol or a ruined fane. It is not easy to strike old broken strings. Armed hordes threaded the mountains to the *El Dorado* of the Ganges plains. One can imagine silvery reeds by the flowing water and the narcissi in the rills that Babar loved. The great whorls from the Pamirs on this side throw off a great range. It cribs the rivers in narrow gorges for a while. There is a big peak towering far above the Suleimans. The lower frontier hills of India are torn and storm-swept. There is a great swelling circle of snowy hills around the Peshawar Valley. It is a sweep of snow-clad hills. In winter.

" The snowbound trade of the north comes down
To the market square of Peshawar town."

Peshawar is fortunate in being able to tap the irrigation system which waters the fields of the villages. The result is pleasant. Many of the bungalows have delightfully green lawns. Lawns with masses of roses. Peshawar is now the fruit garden of India. Fruit shops are piled high with apples, grapes, pears, melons, pomegranates. Sugar-cane is of the finest quality. Chillies are also harvested profusely to tingle the throats of Bombay,

Calcutta and Madras, where most of the spices of all kinds are consumed. Fruits of the highest grade grow on the banks of the River Bara with which I have the most delicious memories of my childhood. There in the Garden of Eden we wandered as nudes, hunting mushrooms, unaware of the cobra-headed civilization, on the ribbed banks of the rivulet at Akbarpura. Fourteen miles east of Peshawar, on the North-Western Railway and the Grand Trunk Road, there is a market village of very humble dimensions, where Maharaja Ranjit Singh encamped, a century and a quarter ago, on the eve of his attack on Peshawar. When he got the tidings of conquest, he gave his jewelled necklace to the messenger. This historic village is called Pabbi. Here I was born.

CHAPTER II

THE KEY OF INDIA

THE KHYBER PASS has always been the key to the gorgeous treasures of India down the splendid sweep of centuries. To-day is the child of yesterday. And thinking of the past is a mighty wave of luxury. Imagination roams far back in the mists of time. The Hindu Kush means the "point where the Hindu perishes." A place where the Hindu Empire ends. In the days of yore, Hindu Kush Mountains were the natural terminus of Hindustan. These mountain ranges run at great altitude for many miles north of Kabul. When "the glory that was Ind"—of the Shakespearian phrase—Kabul was a part of India. Once upon a time, it was a vital Buddhist centre. No Buddhist could have dreamt of the irresistible Muslim waves tiding slipshod on their homeland a few centuries hence. Now Kabul is so predominantly Muslim that imagination revolts at the idea of a Hindu Kabul. Yet such was the case when Chinese pilgrims, brimming with fine firm faith, trod down the zig-zags of the Khyber Pass. Defying danger and death they marched through deep gorges.

The migrant waves came with caravans and cattle. They reached the oasis of Herat and of Seistan. Then wound up the valleys of Ghazni and Kabul. Thence reached India through one of the passes. The earliest arrivals were the Dravidians. They lived as far as the Suleiman Mountains. Even now the Brahins who live among the Baluch speak a Dravidian tongue. They are also found tricked away in the more inaccessible whirls

of the ranges south of the Pamirs. These are called Dards. The mysterious Kafiristan also contained a Macedonian pocket.

Then the forces of Nature set the fair Aryan tribes afoot. For a song they gave up their lovely lands and fine fields in Central Asia. It must be a sad song indeed. As sad as the strains of Wordsworth's *Solitary Reaper* or Arnold's *Philomel* or Keats' *Nightingale*. It was probably the music of rotting sand-hills smothering their soil. It set the owners pressing forward. Thus a great shuffle started. On top of this, came the tidings of richer lands. Lands lovely and luxuriant beyond the mountains. The snow-clad hills of the blue horizon. Thus the great white Aryan race set itself a-moving. Its trek followed to Europe, to Persia, and to India. The flow of humanity swirled round the bases of the mountains and watered valleys. Then threaded down the Khyber Pass into the Land of the Five Rivers. The Aryan tides knocked up the country of Sirhind, the top of India. Thence ran downhill into the fertile Gangetic plains. The Aryan kingdom stretched from Oxus the Barahamputra. Century after century the fortified city of Balkh stood as a bulwark against another great wave of race movement. The Aryan kept to the open plains and the line of least resistance. He drove the Dravidians before him. The Aravalli Mountains called a halt to the Aryan march. The great wall of gorge and jungle was mercilessly uninviting. The Oxus was the frontier of this great stretch of Aryana.

Then came Alexander of Macedon. It was a great figure. A giant that stretched forth the hand of might across half the civilized world. India could not slip through his thumb-screws. Swung through the passes and

emerged into the Frontier Valley. Here he had the toughest duel with the hill tribes who gnawed his army like rats. The march of Alexander is spoken of with abated breath. It was the last word in enterprise and wonder. Wonder and wander. Persia was honeycombed with Greek influence. Greek traders followed the silk road. The march of Alexander was well-staged with wheeled vehicles. He was ready at Nyssa in the neighbourhood of modern Kabul for his march into India. Then slowly he wound along the valleys and over the passes. And made for the Indus ford at Amb. By the way, Indus itself is a Greek word and no doubt dates from the time of Alexander's invasion. He reached the banks of Indus along the great tumbled ranges of the Indus Kohistan. Through the serrated ridges behind the Malakand the Macedonian filed down to the plains. And they swore at the hostile slingers on the crag tops, whose stones rattled round the Greek heads. They had to picket the gorge while the convoy followed through. The lawless *Aparvetæ* have been a plague then as now. Alexander had elephants packed with engineer materials and artillery stores for battering great walls. He took the kinglets and the stronghold of Aornos rather than leave it a thorn in his side. Reaching Jhelum, he fought Porus the Noble, beaten but not crushed. But the battle is not always to the swift. The Europeans of Alexander were fed up. And he had to give way. Battling and marching, he took his way by the devil coast of Baluchistan to Babylon. There in 325 B.C. he died as his troops filed past his bed.

Then came the Tartars, the almond-eyed. It is called the Mongol fold. It has an evolutionary romance. And it is worthy of being dwelt on. In the desert of Gobi the sand-dried cities of Khotan were the

nurserydom of the Tartar race. They were pressed by the smothering of cornfields by the wind-borne sand, from rotting sandstone mountains. A trek outward began. It flowed periodically into India in great waves. Large parts of the Frontier were colonized with Tartar offshoots. The waves lapped around the valleys of Peshawar. Wherever the hand of the Tartar has fallen, culture has vanished into the thin air. Their domination was widespread. Four great Tartar dynasties ruled the whole of Asia. The almond-eyed races are the descendants of Cain, the murderer. So the tradition has it. The history of Tartars tinges with a bleeding and cut-throat interest.

Then came the influence of Buddhism on the Frontier. For up the valleys from the Indus to the Hindu Kush are to be found the remains of Buddhist stupa and monasteries. The Swat and Kunar Valleys are bristling with interest. These are mingled with Greek carvings and temples. A cultured Government in the Frontier of those days encouraged and protected the builders. But the Tartar invasions broke through the Aryan fence. Buddhism also passed on to the custody of Mongoloid folk. Chinese pilgrims came to visit the great monasteries on the Indus. They paid homage to the ashes of Buddha in the Kanishka Stupa outside modern Peshawar. This shrine was lost for many hundred years. It has now been discovered, complete with casket and ashes, by the enterprising Dr. Spooner of the Indian Archaeological Department. "Therefore," says Sir George Macmunn, "in thinking of the North-West Frontier of India we must think of it as a country full of remains of the ancient Way, presenting countless unexplored sites, and an immense wealth of Buddhist as well as Greek remains and not merely as the bare

snowswept or sun-scorched hills, inhabited by uncouth fanatical Muslim tribes. We must picture to ourselves cross-legged ascetics and kindly philosophers sitting in the monasteries and shrines on the hill-side, telling their beads and teaching fat, round-eyed children, where in our time Chikai the free-booter would swag and shoot." *

Thus the golden age of the Frontier is yet shrouded in mystery. The future historian will dig in the mines of the past more gems of cultural beauty than a modern imagination can grasp.

The greatness and glory of Alexander would have melted in the hot oven of warring Frontier were he not helped by the kinglets on the Indus. We know them as the Jats, the Getae of history. It was another great colonizing stream from Central Asia. Coming through the passes in Zhob, the Jats worked up the Indus. They drove the purer Aryan folk into the mountains. Later on, the Jats and Aryans agreed to mingle. It is difficult to come across a pure Jat. Now Jats are Aryan Jats. Porus the Noble was beaten by Jats the Rude rather than by Alexander the Great. Indian forces were indeed a match for the Greek army. Hence the invincibility of Alexander is a myth. Porus was defeated by the traitors rather than the invaders. His own chiefs undermined his Empire. The Sikh fraternity is largely composed of the Jat tribes. Let Sir George Macmunn remember that the Jats have never bothered the British since the annexation of the Punjab. Never turned sour against the British. Never fallen in the Brahmin nest of anti-British intrigues and venom. Never involved in the under-currents of political struggle. But now the Jats of the Panjab, like the wild tribes of the Frontier,

*_The Romance of the Indian Frontiers_, p. 58.

are coming under the spell of Russian influence. The Kisan Movement, legalized in the Panjab since the entry of Russia in the war, is a limb of red politics. But the Khudai Khidmatgars, the Red Shirts of the Frontier, are not so red as they appear. The organization of the Frontier Gandhi is out and out a pro-Congress nationalist body. Talking of Jats we are reminded of Jutland. One wave of semi-Aryan Jats followed the earlier Aryan waves to Europe. When the British Government sent Daleep Singh, the boy-king of the Panjab to England, a house was found for him in Kent, because Colonel Sleeman told him, "You are Jat, and in Kent you will be among your own people, for they are all Jats from Jutland." Thus the peaceful penetration of the Aryan civilization is full of romance. And a person with historic outlook will find his kinsman in any nook and cranny of the globe. Humanity is a brotherhood from the Frontier to Finland and all the world around. One needs nothing but imagination to shake hands with the Afridis as the children of our great grand uncles and aunts. True, the Frontier tribes have no touch of culture as we understand it to-day. But so we were all, before we clad ourselves in the twinkling garments of civilization.

Alexander's kingdom at Balkh lasted many years after his death. It continued to function as the buttress of Aryan civilization against Tartar influences and inroads. But waves of Scythians swelled on the Oxus. These were too strong for the Macedonian control. The Aryanized Greeks were driven eastwards and set up in the Frontier without difficulty. They were responsible for Greek civilization in the Indus Valley rather than the garrisons left by Alexander. In this we can read a great historical lesson. No conqueror in the

heyday of his pride can exercise a notable influence on the heart of a vanquished community. He must get mingled with them as one of their kinsmen. Hence the British influences on India are merely time-bound. If the British are the bearers of a new torch of civilization, let them get mixed with the sons of the soil in India. If they dare do so, the political grievances of India will go hollow. They may rule us as our kinsmen from Europe, provided they get absorbed by and by. Let India become free by an internal evolution rather than an external revolution. Therein lies the greatest safety of the British Empire. John Bull should not remain a foreigner for ever in the green gardens of Hindustan. History shows that nothing is a redder rag to a settled people than a band of strangers who resist to be swallowed and digested in the general body politic of a community.

The Greek kings in the Frontier bewilder us by the multitude of their mintings. Remains of their cities abound. Along the boundaries of the Frontier are the remains of the Græco-Bactrian Frontier posts. These were set to keep, as now, the hill tribes off their herds and homes. All over the country-side, the people come across Greek coins. I had a few myself to play with in the days of my childhood in a village at Peshawar. Coins are found in great quantities among the ruins at Akra near Bannu. In the Valley of Swat the Græco-Buddhist remains are innumerable. There are carvings on stone of great beauty, friezes of Greek singers and dancers. "These have unfortunately been much injured by the Muslim thirst to destroy all representations of the human figure as impious, and by the desire of the British in the past to purchase figures broken off the ancient temples which the traders would bring in."

(Sir George Macmunu). The Greek kingdoms in the Frontier held sway for centuries. They greatly influenced the growing Buddhism. Gradually they melted into the sons of the soil. Among the good-looking Frontier lads, pure Greek profile can be seen to this day. The ancient blood seemingly resisted defilements as the centuries rolled on. The observer is struck with wonder. Alexandarine strain seems to have found its way into several families. The Buddhist monasteries discovered in the gorges close to the city of Taxila are themselves astounding works of intricate and fantastic Greek carvings.

In the seventh century took place the birth of Islam. Islam means "The submission to the Will of God." Islam was the religion of the wild tribes. Fierce wild tribes of Arabia whom Christianity impinged. Impinged for centuries but nevertheless failed to absorb. Arabs took to Islam as duck takes to water. No doubt they relished the cult of sword and the luxury of harems. Harems made up of numberless captured beauties from the homes of infidels. Infidelity meant no more than cultured capitalism. Islam was a convenient religion. It taught no martyrdom of Christianity or kindliness of Buddhism. Personally I doubt very much if it was the real intent of the Prophet, but that is how the untamed savage understood it. All the more unlucky, because interpretations of Qur-an can be easily keyed up to a barbaric outlook. But that is a grave injustice to the letter and spirit of Islam. Prophet Mohammad meant no such thing. His was a religion of "The Submission." Submission to God and His glory, not to gold and glamour. Any reader between the lines of Qur-an will reach the correct conclusion. On the authority of personal study I assert that there is no difference

between the Gita and the Bible, the Bible and the Qur-an. These were selfish Muslim generals who abused their religion for their pocket phrases. Qur-an, to be understood, must be studied in text A to Z without the help of any commentations whatsoever by any authority howsoever great. No authority is greater than the Prophet. And no guide to Qur-an better than the Qur-an itself. These are my personal impressions. The fierce Arabs turned on their neighbours. They demanded acceptance of Islam at the point of sword. The Arab faith and the Arab rule spread like wild-fire. It swept over Persia, ran along Africa, and surged into Spain. The Persian waves lapped round the key of India. And Islamic rule followed Islam religion. Floods reaching Kabul rolled on towards India. The mighty task of expansion kept the Arabs and their converts busy. For centuries Aryan chivalry succeeded in expelling the invaders. High up in the Frontier hills we find the Kot of Rajah Beel and that of Rajah Teel. These castles of the unbelievers frown down from the Khyber peaks. Peaks high and haunted, strong and silent, dark and dour. The men of the hills, Wazirs and Afridis, went down to Islam. It was natural that the raiders should join hands with the invaders. An Afridi, like Lord Byron, may well say, "I am for the opposition." Opposition, of course, to any established government in the Frontier, Muslim, British or Hindu. The lawless raiders like lawless invaders. Any race attacking down the Khyber Pass may count on the support of the Afridis so long as it does not establish itself as the lawful government of India. When the reign of law begins, up goes the Afridi with his rifle to his mountain den. Instinctively democratic, the Afridis very well understand the absurdities of blue books. They hate monarchy dictator-

ship or bureaucracy. If India becomes a republic, it is bound to command respect and support of the hill-tribes. That is why the Frontier Gandhi, Abdul Ghaffar Khan, is so popular among the Afridis, Waziris and other clans.

When Sabaktagin attacked India, the Hindu Raja on the Khyber Pass was betrayed by a dancing girl. Her house, the *Khanjari kothi*, still stands. She sold the garrison and admitted the invaders. Sabaktagin, having secured the Key of India, invaded Hindu territory and took Peshawar. Advancing on India he met the forces of Jai Pal. Hindus were defeated and Sabaktagin annexed the whole of the North-West Frontier Province, west of Indus, as it stands to-day. Henceforth the Frontier ceased to be a Hindu territory. It was the first firm foothold of Islam in the Peshawar Valley. Ere long invading India become a habit with hordes of wild hillmen. Also it was a nice pretext for propagating Islam. Mahmud swept far down into India. Enslaved thousands of Hindus. Forced them into the Faith. Carried off all comely girls he could catch. Took the lovely lads as slaves. Splintered the carven images that ornamented the Hindu temples. His method was to heat the images by bonfires and then dash water on the heated stone. Mahmud destroyed even the super-saintly temple of Somnath. We can imaginatively see the caravans of outraged Hindu maidens, the troops of beautiful orphaned boys, and the camels laden with the sack of cities up the glorious Khyber Pass.

To Muhammad of Ghor the use of India as a milch cow was not enough. They determined to conquer and keep. Indian princes put up little resistance. Muslim kingdom was set up at Lahore. It soon spread to Delhi. The Afghans went deep into India. Dynasties at

Peshawar, Lahore and Delhi became Tartar. India was persecuted and butchered for generations to make a Tartar holiday. Afghans are the descendants of Afghana, a son of Saul of Israel. Thus this part of the Key of India touches what William Bolitho calls " those eternal contemporaries," the Jews. Are the hill-tribes Jews ? It is difficult to answer in the affirmative. There is little difference between Pathans and Jats of the Punjab, except the influences of time and clime. No doubt, these are the Getæ of history and have a common origin. The claim of the Duranis to be the children of Israel may easily be true. Many Pathans in old age have a Jewish appearance. It may be possible that the hillmen of the Frontier are the Lost Tribes of Israel. At any rate, a *trek* along the valleys from Persia would be nothing of a move. Equally possible it is that they may have come of some offshoot of the Babylonian Captivity. Their names are very Jewish and Biblical names do appear more often among them than among other Muslims.

Afghan kingdoms in lower India waxed powerful. Eastern Afghanistan became a portion of India. The Frontier hillmen shot at the strong and slashed at the weak as of yore. They rode with Muslim kings to Delhi, but Muslim Empire made no difference to them. In their own fastnesses they bowed the knee to no man. Tribesmen were wild and untouched by Muslim civilization. Then there arose one of the most fascinating characters in history, Babar, the Chughtai Turk. His mother descended from Changez Khan, and he himself was sixth in descent from Tamerlane. He had no love of Moghal connection. The world quailed before it in shuddering memory. The father of Babar was the king of beautiful Farghana. In 1504 he conceived the idea of conquering

India. In 1519 Babar reached Peshawar, but trouble on his Afghan frontiers called him home. Finally he crossed the Indus on 15th December, 1525. Six Moghals were worthy of the name. In the days of Aurangzeb Alamgir, the "World-grasper," the world went out of the Moghal grasp. The edifice began to totter. Top-heavy and ill-balanced, it crashed.

For the next tide of invaders the Khyber Pass was not the gate but the goal. These were the British merchant adventurers. They hurried to pick up the broken pieces of the Moghal Empire and build up the edifice once again. The British, unlike the Moghals, did nothing to dazzle the world by their wealth and brilliance. It has been all along a prosaic nation. They built no gorgeous forts, no halls of splendour. They have been following the maxim of Chishtie as recorded on his tomb in Fatehpur Sikri, in beautiful flowing form of Arabic : "And Jesus said, the world is a bridge, you must not build on it." The British are treating India as a bridge between the East and the West, although Rudyard Kipling, the Poet of the Empire, is still shouting from his grave at the top of his voice that "East is East, West is West, and the twain shall never meet." Jesus said that the world is a bridge, but Kipling, with his blindfolded owl-eyed philosophy, does not see even the bridge. So the warning of Christ is not intended for the Poet of the Empire.

While the British were marching slowly but surely and steadily on the road of time, the Tartar throne of Delhi tottered and faded. Another dramatic scene took place in the Khyber Pass. A shepherd lad rose to the fame of a soldier. It was no wonder. But the shepherd soldier secured the throne of Persia. This was the beginning of a mighty drama . . . he shepherded the horde of Afghans who wielded the rod of authority

in Iran. Fumbling for the Key of India, with a mighty military procession he appeared at the neck of Khyber Pass. His name was Nadir Shah. His march was fairly easy. The Indus he crossed in a right royal fashion. Only ineffective steps were taken to stop him. The swarms of Persian Turks ate up the land like locusts. Coolly and easily they advanced to Delhi. No one was man enough to try to stop them. They were bent on, if possible, a bloodless squeeze of Delhi. Nadir Shah was received in state outside the city. A flimsy pretext was found to sack and massacre the innocent citizens of India's Rome. A fact which is patriotically hot enough to boil the blood of any and every democratic child. The sins of autocracy must be avenged. Nadir Shah left behind a reign of terror, hecatombs of dead, piles of massacred heads, and his Moghal "brother Turk" on the throne with an empty pocket. It was the last straw that hurried the Empire to its fate. Nadir Shah did not return by the Khyber Pass. He marched through the Baluch hills. The Frontier did not see his blood-red hands which no seas can wash.

Once again on the peaks of Khyber hills the kaleidoscope arranged its disc and glasses. India became the ruling passion of Ahmad Shah Abdali, Beni-Israel, Dur-i-duran, "Pearl of Pearls." The Durani hordes, "the People of the Pearl" soon appeared at Peshawar in search of other people's wealth and women. Ten times did the Pearl of Pearls lead his armies across the Indus. Once was not enough. His thirst was elephantine. His hunger, wolfish. The defeat of Maharattas in 1761 went through India with a wail of despair. It broke the last dream of Free India from foreign domination. Had the Maharattas won the field of Panipat, the history of the world would have changed. But it was not the wild

of Divine Powers that pull the strings of our mother-land. The Maharattas would have given India a democratic state. They had all the characteristics. But the time was not yet ripe for an Indian republic. It was a tragic defeat for the Indian Nation. The Golden Sparrow was left languishing in the Eternal Cage. The Tennysonian gods of the Lotus-eaters were shamelessly smiling in their golden-girdled houses. God never did a greater injustice to our country. He set back the clock of our national struggle to thick black barbaric ages.

The Durani Emperor left Shah Alam, " King of the Universe," untouched on the puppet throne of India. Ahmad Shah died in 1773 after repeated pourings into the Indian Frontier. Soon the Sikhs goose-stepped into power. Maharaja Ranjit Singh was the first Indian ruler, after the lapse of centuries, to stretch his hand to the Khyber Pass. Now no foreïgner could ride in the saddle of the Durani Empire. Ranjit Singh, " the Lion of Victory," formed his one-life Sikh kingdom. Steadily he swept the Afghans out of the Khyber Pass or made them sons of the soil. By 1820 the Afghan Peshawar once again became the Indian capital. For the first time in the modern history, Indian soldiers became the terror of the Afghan armies. Mothers in the Frontier villages had no further need of calming their naughty children by threat of the Afghan. A barrier was placed at the foot of the Afghan hills. The Sikhs, the martial limb of the Indian Nation, overran the Derajat. It is the country of the " people who live in tents." It sweeps inland in a bay between Dera Ismail Khan and Tonk. Now the Indian citizens hunted the wilder tribes back into the mountains. Shah Shujah was driven from Kabul and he sought the aid of the National Government at Lahore and the British Government at Delhi. The Tripartite

Treaty was signed in a Simla garden. The Shah was to be restored to the " Throne of his fathers." So the treaty somewhat pompously stated. Then began the most dramatic episode, the first Afghan War. The British were embarking on a great adventure light-heartedly. The Lahore National Government did not permit the allies to march on the Frontier. The peace of the Indian citizens, after the lapse of centuries, was not to be disturbed in the Frontier countryside. That was a wise step that the short-lived National Government of the Punjab could and did enforce. The armies marched *via* Baluchistan. They had their first experience of the frontier's man as armed robber. Stragglers were cut off by night. They reached Kandahar, flowing with fruit, milk and honey. The fickle army of Kabul fled like chaff. The army of the Indus stood deserted on the crest of a rise. The Shah re-entered his lost capital. The Afghans showed no sign of enthusiasm at their rightful king's return. 1840 passed into 1841, and all seemed amazingly quiet. Dost Muhammad threw up the sponge and surrendered. He was sent up to Calcutta as a State prisoner. Just before Christmas 1841 there were most pitiful scenes of a massacre of half-frozen Indian troops. Regiment after regiment was destroyed by the Afghans. Surgeon Brydon was the only survival riding on a broken-down pony into Jalalabad. It was a great shock to the British prestige. This is the first story of the events which brought the British to the hills and passes known as the North-West Frontier. The great General Avitabile ruled in Peshawar on behalf of the Sikhs. He kept a gallows at each corner of his garden for prompt punishment to the hot-headed hillman. Not many years hence, the Punjab was annexed and the Frontier passed on to the British. John Nicholson and Herbert

Edwardes garrisoned the Derajat. George Lawrence and Reynel Taylor went over to Peshawar. Abbott controlled Hazara. Herbert was posted at Attock. Lawrencepur and Abbottabad remind us of these pioneer military officers. No Afghan invader put his nose inside British India till 1919 when Amanullah put his neck to the British windmill and was blown over to Italy as an exile.

Now begin the British tribal relations. It is a romantic drama on the altar of disappointment. The British soldier has never before experienced such a tough-and-tumble life. It is worth while to quote a stanza from Mr. Kipling's *Frontier Arithmetic* :—

"A scrimmage in a Border Station,
A canter down some dark defile,
Two thousand pounds of education
Drops to a ten-rupee Jezail."

It is a story of martyrdom with a note of pathos. There is no other rule of life in the hills than " an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth." The working of the leaven of peaceful penetration can only be recognized darkly through a glass. This is a chapter of British difficulties. The tribes speak through the bullets. The Frontier fires !

The Punjab Frontier Force has long been used for semi-police work. It is famous for hardiness and handiness in frontier fighting. " The Regular Army " at Peshawar is much too big a hammer for this purpose. There were also many corps raised for rough and ready local work. The drill and methods of these corps were on guerilla lines. Their principal cantonment is Abottabad in the beautiful upland valley of Hazara. The official name of Bannu is Edwardesabad after the Herbert Edwardes of Multan fame. It is also an important

cantonment of the Irregular Force. Peshawar buzzes with the ordinary come and go of military life. It has become a huge British garrison town.

In 1857 there took place the drama of Peshawar. There were only a few British Troops noted for lightness and go-every-where-ish-ness. In the First Afghan War they crossed the Hindu Kush in their brass helmet and tigerskin rolls. In the spring of 1857 strange rumours of the Indian Revolution crept up to Peshawar. The mutterings of the greased cartridge trouble seemed so trivial in front of the fierce frontier hills. The mass of Bengal regiments were clustered in and round Peshawar for the defence of India. Anything wrong with them was unthinkable. John Lawrence was one of the stout hearts who could face dangers. The Frontier had pick of the young officers of the day. Major-General Reed was switched off as Commander of the Troops in the Punjab. The outbreak at Meerut and Delhi showed what the danger really was. Colonel Edwardes was Commissioner of Peshawar. The stories of the revolutionary army swept over the North. The tribes of the frontier hills pricked up their ears. Now was the golden opportunity. The masterful English were to go under. The Afridis sharpened up their knives. The Waziris looked to the priming of their matchlocks. In the bazaars of Peshawar the tribesmen were lobbying hard. A few British poked out in this mountain-girt enclave. The Afghans licked their lips. Amir Dost Muhammad was mindful of his promises. He had hobnobbed with John Lawrence only a year ago. So he held his hand. Nevertheless, trouble was fermenting at Peshawar. Cotton and Edwardes decided to go the whole hog forthwith. They disarmed the bulk of the regiments at Peshawar. They were taken by surprise

in front of the European corps and the guns with port-fires lighted. The sepoys laid down their arms. The staunchness of the Kelat-i-Ghilzie regiment was not doubted. Its corps were not touched. The Guides created troubles. Many were cut down by the 10th Irregular Cavalry and the mounted police of John Nicholson. One hundred and fifty soldiers were captured. The remainder dragged their columns across the border. There they were coldly received. Hunted and slaughtered. The tribesmen valued their arms and uniforms. Prisoners were sentenced to death. Forty were blown from guns on a parade of the disarmed regiments. The danger on the Frontier was over. The tribesmen flocked down to enlist in the corps. The capture of Delhi appealed to the untamed rustics. And to Delhi all would go. This is a story of glory. The glory of the stiff upper lip. No trouble of lawlessness could take place under the rim of Afghan snows and frowning cliffs. Neither it should. These are the valleys where once the gentle philosophy of Buddha held sway.

In 1878 the Frontier was shaken out of its peaceful slumbers by the Second Afghan War. From that day began the era of the "Scientific Frontier." Control of the routes to India was fully secured. The war was the necessity of having a pro-British rather than pro-Russian Afghanistan. A British regiment stormed the Khyber Pass. The Amir had to go down on his knees before the rulers of the waves. The return of the troops suffering from cholera is pathetic. It has been told by Kipling, the poetic historian of the Frontier, dramatically in *Love of Woman.* The Highlanders came out of the Khyber "swinging their rumps like buck rabbits." Wars in Afghanistan have always been a romantic memory. A great season of prosperity followed.

By 1892 the actual frontiers between British India and Afghanistan were marked out. The Durand Line was established. Some trouble was created by statelets in the big whorls that edge the Pamirs. The Russian officers poked their noses across the passes. These ring of states nestle on the ridges of the Himalayas. They are under the shadow of the Kashmir Government. Kashmir was ordered to see that these fleas should not come a-meddling with the British giant. The Kashmir Government did the desirable without poaching in Afghan waters. The result of this policy was the "Campaign on the Roof of the World." It was a thrilling adventure.

Thus the Frontier has from time to time given a mighty little trouble to John Bull. The British Government has always been very sensitive to the slightest move in the Frontier hills. Like their predecessors, they have not been able to control the tribal areas, popularly known as the "No-man's Land." Like the Greeks, the Muslims and the Sikhs, the British have little to their credit. The policy of peaceful penetration moves at snail's pace. Meanwhile, the Afridi pokes his nose from time to time and stirs the British giant from its slumbers, if it ever has any under the snow-swept Afghan hills. John Bull has lavished men and money like water on this frontier of the British Empire, because it is the key to India. He has kept the hillman in his den by bribes and bullets. The hill people have always pocketed the bribes easy enough, but never failed to return a bullet for bullet. Strength of mysterious silence is the chief feature of the Frontier. The Frontier does not speak. When it does speak, it is always through bullets. The Frontier fires!

CHAPTER III

THE FRONTIER FIRES !

THE Government of India has done well to proscribe the book *The Frontier Speaks.* It may be ironical. But it is psychologically true. My impression is that the Frontier does not speak. The Frontier cannot speak. If the Frontier ever speaks, it is through the bullets. The Frontier fires ! All through the centuries, long long before the invasion of Alexander, the Frontier has never spoken a word. Born and bred up in the Frontier, I know, as well as anybody else, that this is the province of the dumb masses. Illiteracy and ignorance in the Frontier is appalling. There is no English daily, the international mouthpiece of the masses, in the whole of the province. Peshawar is covered by the Lahore newspapers. People in the Frontier get, if they get at all, only yesterday's news. There are places in the Frontier, for example, Jandola in the South Waziristan, where a newspaper may not reach for days. The Frontier has no daily, weekly or monthly, in English, Urdu or Pushto, worth the paper it is printed upon. Since the first rosy twilight rays of civilization on the Eastern horizon, literary taste in the Frontier is conspicuous by its absolute absence. As to public speaking as a means of propaganda, the Frontier people have a heart-full of hatred for the cheap tin-toy of Her Hitler. It is a tragedy of to-day that worth means verbosity. Our tons of chit-chat has got not an ounce of sincerity behind it. High and dry speeches in the Parliament do not mean anything more than imaginative waves created by

a loose screw in the brain. The Frontier does not believe in tell-tale debates and discussions of everyday life. The borderman is an embodiment of supreme silent strength. The French titbit that words conceal the mind has found a fruitful fertility of character beyond the Indus.

The Frontier, with its overwhelming ignorance, has always been a plague for the invasion of culture. Alexander the Conqueror was so much afraid of the Khyber tribes that discretion advised him a different route. No wonder, these lost children of Israel have been a knotty problem for the British. The Frontier tribes are knotry as well as naughty. The tribal republics are an interesting institution. Time and tide has left them practically untouched in their glens and fastnesses. Every man is an ever-ready soldier. On the spur of a moment he answers the call. The call to arms in defence of his homeland. Most tribes are honeycombed with feud and faction. There is no government. Nobody is invested with authority. Authority rests with the whole body of tribesmen. Islam is a unifying force all along the border. The Muslim Pathans are not in a mood to throw in their lot with the British Empire. To quell the Waziristan tribes the Indian Government employed between 30,000 to 40,00Ɔ troops. " It would probably not be far wide of the mark," says Sir William Barton, " to say that India is spending twelve or fifteen millions a year on what is really border police work, money which should be available for the general purpose of defence." There is a hatred, without rhyme or reason, bred in the Afridi mind towards the European. Allowances are paid to the Afridis. Even then there is a mighty deal of fighting. Punitive expeditions are the despair of all wise heads. There are many things that tot up on the debit

side of tribal behaviour. It has always been recognized that much of the trouble is economic. Young men tread on each other's heels. Some outlet is needed. Openings in the police and army are well guarded against them. A tribal allowance is the credit against which the British authority can operate for tribal mis-behaviour. This is the only effective bombshell of the political officer. "The Government will pay no more allowances," he warns the Tribal Parliament from time to time, "if there is a single cause for complaint in the next six months." The spell works. Money makes the mare go. And go properly. But mere gold is not enough. The tribal tails have also to be twisted. Many whizzing pow-wows take place. There are many dramatic scenes of rough affection. A rhythmic see-saw of raids and counter-raids. Sometimes the bait of imperial giants is given. Landed hillmen come remarkably under the influence of political officers. The Frontier is a maze of human interest and despair. There is no humdrum advance of the *Pax Britannica.* The civilizing influences are never quietly at work. Violent crimes have reached appalling figures. Disarmament in the settled districts has very little effect on the volume of crime.

There is an improved system of armament among the tribes. The tribes which cannot he disarmed by the British authority. This is a factor of outstanding importance. Before the war of 1897 many of the tribesmen acquired breech-loading rifles. Gun-runners started a thriving trade through the Persian Gulf. There was also a leakage from Kabul arsenals. Rifle thieves were even on the prowl round British cantonments. Now and again they brought off a coup. Tribesmen were ready to pay fantastic prices for a British Lee Metford. Fifty pounds for a gun was a common figure.

A figure equal to four years' income of an ordinary tribesman. But a tribesman values his gun above all his earthly possessions. A rifle is an Afridi's chief capital-in-trade. Gun commerce through the Gulf has once been exceedingly active. Gun-running from Kabul is pretty common even these days. There are very few tribesmen who have not a weapon of precision. There are rifles of European make in large numbers. There is also a factory of rifles in the Kohat Pass. An Indian rifle is sold for ten pounds or less. Such weapons have a short life. But they are fairly accurate. And the Pathan is sparing of ammunition. The British have allowed the manufacture of arms to go on unchecked in the Kohat Pass. It is difficult to say why. The tribesmen cannot be deprived of their weapons. Disarmament of hillmen is officially discouraged. It is regarded as beyond the sphere of politics of a practical nature. Meanwhile, the Pathan takes his toll. More rifles, more raids. The greater loss in men, money and material. There are a quarter of a million well-armed, fighting men. Raiders hostile to the regime. They are a serious standing danger. They threaten the very existence of the British power in India.

Outlawry is another stern fact on the Frontier. Blood-feud murder is rife. And death on the gallows is difficult to go through. The offender takes refuge across the border. There the arm of law cannot reach him. A leading religious *mullah* has always a guard of outlaws. The outlaws are useful hands in the tribal areas. Their knowledge of the British territory comes in handy. The Afridi dacoits make a nice use of them in dacoities. Their local knowledge is of value. Besides, he can visit his kinsmen under the cloak of darkness in the safe escort of his new-fangled hill friends. Much of the

border crime is due to the outlaw. The tribe harbouring him is now held responsible for his safe conduct. It is not always possible to enforce such rules of responsibility. There are to-day over a thousand outlaws across the border. They are a standing threat to the peace of the settled districts. The volume of crime is appalling. Murders have reached the frightening figure of nine hundred in a single year. " With its population of two and a quarter millions only this tale of crime stamps the Frontier Province as the most lawless country on the face of the earth." The trouble is due to Pathan vindictiveness. But that is not the argument. The reactions of transborder unrest are a vital factor behind the smoke-puff of rifle-shots. The unsuitability of the Indian police is also the most potent cause. Crime and outlawry are closely intertwined. It is very difficult to attempt radical changes. Crime is an unwashable slur on the Pathan culture. Tribal opinion does not weigh heavily with the offences of the headstrong youngsters. Transborder conditions are deplorable. There is a lack of controlled policy. Crimes are groundlessly overlooked. There is a need for closest sympathy at the very outset. There is many a plausible defence ready at hand. The tribes cannot be brought to terms unless the hills are fully blockaded. Made fool-proof. And troops are flung across the border. In a crisis the tribal people range themselves on the side of Kabul. They have no respect for geographically dotted lines. Kabul is nearer their hearts and hearths than Delhi. They want to play the role of Islam champions. From the British they get no spiritual profit. It does not ensure an open gateway to heaven. Rather than the lawful British, they are more at home with a gang of desperate outlaws. They capture Hindus and hold them up to ransom. Tribal

responsibility is a fiction. The main inlets from Bazaar Valley should be closed. Properly controlled, they will not have to be coerced. Peace will not be threatened every evening. And there will be longer period of peace and prosperity.

The first Frontier trouble started in 1891. It was a war on the roof of the world. The two statelets of Hunza and Nagar, facing each other on the Kanjut River, defied the British authority. The Thumb of Hunza claimed his descent from Alexander. And lived in isolated pride. Gilgit was the headquarters of an outlying agency of Kashmir. In 1888 the Kanjutis captured the Kashmir fort of Chalt. The Kashmir troops were remodelled for Imperial purposes. Service at Gilgit has long been deemed the last word in horror and exile. The troops there have seldom smiled. Two British officers exploring on the Pamirs were arrested by Russians in May 1891. Also the Kanjuti tribes have been the terror of the traders on the high passes. The British Government asserted its authority in those distant confines. " Potentates like myself and Alexander of Macedon, " stated the Thumb of Hunza, " answer no summons and acknowledge no rule." He rejected the British summons scornfully. And refused to restrain his unruly people. The British armies started up for *Nilt*. It is a fort higher up closing the gorge to the Nagar country. The roadways were closed by a stone slide from above. A flood of stones would sweep away all who tried to pass along. The mountain guns could make no impression on the walls of *Nilt*. The Sappers clambered up to the gateway under heavy fire. The gate was blown and the troops rushed in. Hunza could not be tackled so easily. Expert cragsmen escalade the crevassed funnels in the cliff. Gurkhas and Dogras

attempted the astounding feat. Sure and certain death from an avalanche of stones was in prospect. Steadily and steadfastly they faced the adventure of death. Their companions watched them breathlessly. The God of Battle was with the scalers. The gallant pug dogs arrived on the top and hustled out the defenders.

In 1897 started another drama on the Frontier front. The tribal minds were disturbed and inflamed. The quietening of the Kanjut robbers gave rise to a thousand rumours. Turkey and Greece had been to war, and the Crescent triumphed over the Cross. The news came as a brainstorm to the Frontier hills. The Afridis yelled and beat their drums. Rub-a-dub *Ya Allah* ! It was going to be a war of glory for all and heaven for those who bleed. The frontiers answered the call. The would-be martyrs seized their swords. The witnesses to the faith grasped their banners. Up and down the glen wandered the mullahs. They piled prayer on prayer and text on text. Texts in Arabic that they themselves did not understand. But the clansmen yelled approval. And the number of *shahids* swelled mightily. It touched the Pathan hearts with glory till they shed the tears of immortal joy. The summer was at its height. A political officer found himself surrounded by loopholed watch-towers and village walls. Two mountain guns stood in action and the mules were nuzzling their nosebags. The midday wore on. The pickets were out looking for distant enemies. The troops were amusing the villagers by playing their bagpipes. All was peace in the midday haze. Suddenly it was noted that the villagers were drawing off. Every tower and turret began to fire among the resting troops. The firing was at first directed on the officers—officers who were lounging apart from their men. The officers

sprang up. Colonel Bunny fell morality wounded. Two more were hit. The gunners rushed to their guns. They poured case shot into a rush of approaching swordsmen. The infantry fired as best they could. The guns were ordered to limber up and get away. No easy matter under such a fire. Then ten Sikhs charged the villagers behind the wall. It gave time for the guns to be packed on the mules back. All gave their lives that the guns should get away. This memory on the forefinger of time sparkles for ever. The force withdrew to the edge of a sloping plain. It was a slow, dogged movement. Here a stand was made. Happily help was on its way hot-foot. Like wolves the hillmen were gathering in force to make a rush. The weary soldiers took heart of grace. They hugged their smoking rifles. Drove off the raiders with steady rifle fire. It was midnight before all were safely gathered in Datta Khel. Next morning the corpses of the slain were found cruelly and horribly mangled and mutilated. A British division was hurried across the hot plains to re-establish the *Pax Britannica.* The danger signal on the Malakand also shortly met with response.

The hot season was in full swing. The tribes on the Malakand Ridge, overlooking the Swat Valley, were drowsing, reasonably alert in the shimmering sun and haze. The outlying post of Chakdara was amid the deep green of the cultivation. There was nothing unduly alarming. Nothing to enliven the routine of the hot weather. There were no dangerous persons to be combed out. The garrison on the Malakand was playing its usual game of polo down on the flats at Khar in the Swat Valley. They heard that the remote gatherings were getting nearer. As the officers were going to mess, the Pathans came up the graded road. A series

of wild attacks commenced. The tribesmen came faster than the wings of rumour. They swarmed in the first dusk up through the Amandarra Pass, the "den of safety". They were on the defences like the surge of a spring-tide. The orders for the midnight march had put every one on the alert. The tribesmen with jabbing knife and bell-mouthed pistol, rushed over the stone walls and sandbags. The troops were some of the finest in the Indian Army. Discipline prevailed. Ordered commands were possible. The bayonets drew the tribesmen from galling coigns of vantage. The hand-to-hand fighting continued until the cool breeze of the false dawn began to herald the morning. Then the hostile sharpshooters withdrew to the heights. The reserve companies searched the scared ravines. They felt they had got the attackers cold. Nevertheless, the clansmen were pouring into the crowded roads. At dusk the tribes came streaming up the Buddhist roads. They planted waving banners on every hill. Then commenced a determined musketry attack. The swordsmen crept up to every point of vantage. The pickets had a breathing space. Then the attackers overran the defences. It was a grim hand-to-hand struggle. The combatants withered in each other's grip. Bayonets were brought to the charge with a grim slap of hands in the tightened rifle sling. Banners waved and breastworks stood up against the skyline. The defences among these yelling hordes were no more steady as a rock. Their bottoms were shaken. Now the black-shirted tribes from Buner arrived in their thousands. The Guides Infantry arrived to reinforce the British troops. The new arrivals tried their luck in likely corners and gorges. The next morning dawned quietly enough till midday. Some activity sent the garrison to its alarm

posts. The eve of Friday was a holy one. The tribes were likely to make their best combined attack thereon. Soon after sundown a heavy fire opened. The frantic tribes yelled and surged. The assault died away somewhat earlier. The night passed away quietly enough. Next morning the attacks were renewed. The battalions fought their way with great difficulty. In the plains the 45th Sikhs had the thinnest of times. Its defence was only one post gun manned by retired soldiers, affectionately known as "The Blokes." Lieutenant Rattray got through a press of tribesmen. The tribesmen who sprang, as it were, from the ground. On August 2, 1897, this post was attacked by an overwhelming number of tribesmen. But forty sabres came to their assistance after an exciting ride. They had to run the gauntlet of riflemen and cut their way through swordsmen. Then the fog of war descended. The garrison fought for its life. The raiders were the finest marksmen in India. They made even the loopholes untenable. The signal tower was as good as useless. There were two many sharpshooters around. With great gallantry a Sikh signaller slipped out under heavy fire. He set his helio up, and got the words through "Help us." It was too late to organize a sally. The Guides Cavalry made a splendid gesture. Being ready saddled they hurried down towards the plain, lance and sabre in hand, amid a heavy fire from all directions. It was a grand display of daring. Masses of tribesmen swarmed down from the heights. Reckless fanaticism was burning fiercely, led by the dancing Mullahs, those "adjutants of doom." The charge of the cavarly is one of the most thrilling episodes of Indian military history. Like the waves of the sea, the tribesmen rushed round the galloping cavalrymen. Lance and sabre rose and fell. The tribesmen

went fleeing before them. Over a hundred bit the dust. The horse of Lt.-Col. R. B. Adams was killed under him. Many an officer and man was wounded. Colonel Reid ordered their recall. Sir Bindon Blood arrived with reinforcements. The incoming troops rested from the strain of heat. Next morning at daybreak the force marched out to relieve Chakdara. It took the offensive generally. A thousand rifles sallied forth. It was supported by four mountain guns. The hill-tops that flanked the road were attacked. The surprised enemy fled from the high ground. At the Amandarra the tribes again made a desperate stand. As the shrapnel spattered along the hill-tops, they were driven forth at the bayonet's point. The troops were urged on by the sound of heavy firing from Chakdara. They emerged into the open to find the bridges destroyed. Progress in the flooded fields was most difficult. The Swat Bridge was intact. Swarms of tribesmen round the fort broke away. They were pursued by horse and foot across the plateau beyond. The garrison, yelling vengeance, joined in. The week in Chakdara had meant almost day and night of ceaseless attack. The swordsmen and the heapers of incendiary grass rushed to and fro. There was always concentrated rifle fire. The careful loopholing and sandbagging kept the casualties low. Fatigue was intense. Losses brought the garrison almost to their last gasp. The fury of the tribesmen was happily their own undoing. Their mullahs had blessed them. Mad Mullah had made the faithful followers "immune" to bullets. But immunity was a sheer superstition. Twelve hundred tribesmen lost their lives. There were well-served rifles within the fort. Far and near were widows a keening. Wright and Rattray heartened their men against the yelling crowds outside.

The Government of India were now thoroughly aroused. Troops were mobilized. And poured up. The scheme of mobilization began to work marvellously. Down from the Himalayas came the officers on leave. Young soldiers returned from the hill-depots. The steamers from England were crammed with soldiers hurrying back. The tribal forces in the Malakand were still in being. The standards waved on every hill-top. The enthusiastic clansmen danced defiance. The political officers were now able to probe the extent of the rising. The clans from the remoter valleys had answered the call of Islam. The Amir of Kabul set chuckling at the British troubles. His officers were taking a fairly active part in whispering evil. A very pretty trade in Afghan ammunition was in progress. The clansmen had sent missions to Kabul. They craved the Amir's blessings. The successful defence of Malakand made the Amir deaf to any suggestions of Pathan leadership. The loss of the Malakand might have seen half the Moslem Punjab in arms. Nevertheless '*La ila ha ill Allah ho*, responded from the mosques and a jolly lad was licking his wound in the Punjab villages. It is worth while to dwell on the Frontier drama amid the ruins of Græco-Bactrian villages. General Blood was directed to march up the Swat Valley and disperse the tribes. Two short marches brought the force up to the "Gate of Swat," the Landaki Pass above the river gorge. The tribesmen and their banners danced defiance among the Græco-Bactrian ruins on the hill-side. The shrapnel spattered up and down the ridges. The troops pressed up the height under its cover. The Guides Cavalry eargerly pursued the fleeing enemy. They found themselves in the midst of a host of tribesmen in fanatical despair. A riot of chargers and revel of blows. Three

officers were killed. Then the bulk of the army came up. The penitent jirgas came in from all tribes with in reach. This was a romantic adventure in this beautiful valley, once the home of an extended Græco-Bactrian civilization. The countryside is full of Buddhist monasteries. Round the remains of these the British troops were fighting. With the coming of Islam began the downfall of the humanities. These gentle civilizations gave way to the wild fanaticism of the savage tribes Tribes that overran the civilized countryside. The wealth of archæological material is very great.

Another outbreak took place in the Peshawar Valley. It astounded the Government. Almost due north of Peshawar, across the Kabul River, stands the old Sikh fort of Shabkadr. There had been some talks of disturbances in the Mohmand hills. The authorities neither probed nor took notice of them. The tribes crossed the border and attacked the fort. Fifty Border Military Police held the post. And did so resolutely. Colonel Woon was sent out to their aid. They marched by night to the glow of the burning village. As the troops approached, the Mohmands withdrew. The tired column rested. They were soon hard-pressed by several thousand hillmen. The tribal pressure was very severe. So followed a wing of the 30th Punjabis. Most brilliant cavalry actions took place. The squadrons scrambled out of the broken and stony ground. They rode hell for leather at the flank of the tribesmen with astounding effect. The whole of the Mohmand line, over a mile long, was broken and rolled up. They fled before the relentless lance points. The battle was over. The gasping infantry were able to draw breath. Pursuit was out of the question. One could not see the Mohmands heels from the dust.

After the Shabkadr, the Khyber. Excitement grew intense right on the border line. The Afridis caught the prevailing disease. It was felt that the Mohmand situation must be cleared up. Among the Mohmands were gentlemen in Afghan uniform. There were by now close on 12,000 men in the Peshawar area. The Khyber had been lost. General Elles marched out to punish all who had infringed their traditions of neighbourliness. General Blood was fain to summon his merry men. The reserve brigade under Woodhouse was moved across the frontier to take the head of the spear. Bajaur was still throbbing with excitement. Many of its clans had taken part at Malakand. The Mohmands followed up the withdrawing troops into their camp. Among many casualties. Woodhouse was severely wounded. The onrush of the tribesmen was lit up by the firing of star shell. The fanatics vowed to die. Next morning the cavalry sallied forth and found itself in a hornet's nest. This resulted in close hand-to-hand struggles. The mountain guns were immobile from heavy losses. The troops were very critical of the way they had been led and handled. On September 26, 1897, the screen for the first time was lifted from the inner recesses of the pleasant Mohmand uplands. The troops went into the deepest gorges and burnt the niches of the Mad Mullah. Tribal towers and fortified houses were destroyed. They experienced no further brisk hostilities.

Now the Government made up their minds to cope with the Afridi invasions. Buner and the Bunerwals were allowed to stew in their own juice till the Afridi fog was finished. The Peshawar Division was threading the country of wanton tribes. Tribes who had so wantonly thrown themselves into the plains of India.

An entirely new crop of troubles was breaking out. New raw units were sent out to danger spots. The Mullahs were the nuclei of every sort of intrigue and evil. It is easy to trap in a political leader like the Frontier Gandhi, but the priestly classes, under the garb of their godliness, are too foxy for the ears of even John Bull. The priests are the foes of Indian Unity. They have undermined our national harmony by playing into the hands of anybody who tipped them. The sooner we get them out, the better. The priests have eaten into the vitals of communal harmony. These firebrands have set many a mob aglow. India would be much happier without these Mosques and Temples and Churches and Gurdwaras and Pagodas and worship-places of all types and tints whatsoever. Houses of God have become the houses of the devil. These are the false gods whom we adore. True gods need no worship, no bending of the knees, no reading of the beads, no craming of the bibles. True religion is what Islam ought to be : Resignation to the Will of God. Yet to-day Islam is exactly what it ought not to be : Resignation to the right royal will of fanatical demons. But that is true more or less of all religions including Christianity, and Islam is not particularly to blame.

The Afridis enjoyed well-paid services in protecting the ancient way of Khyber Pass. Also they drew handsome allowances in the British Army. Only the fanatical priests and irresponsible firebrands embroiled them with the Government. The excitement spread to the Afghan hills. The British showed very great concern. Sayad Akbar of Waran carried the fiery cross and raised the Islam-in-danger cry. "Where, therefore, news was received that the excitement was spreading to the Khyber tribes, the Government of India showed very great

concern, and in its desire to avoid an Afridi war, succeeded in making itself an object of derision to the whole world of men, while even the mice shouted scorn" (Sir George Macmunn). Revolt spread with fervour. The wise heads among the Afridi tribes could not get a hearing. In those days the Khyber was held by the Khyber Rifles. The nearest troops were at Peshawar. It was a militia corps furnished by the Afridi clans at British expense. Captain Barton was then the political officer in the Khyber. The Khyber Rifles maintained order on the route to Kabul. But the Afridi clans meant to rise. There was a danger signal on the horizon. Barton was withdrawn. His Rifles were to fight alone! Thus his face was blackened before all the clansmen he dominated. To Barton the order was gall and wormwood beyond relief. He was forced by a timorous Government to disgrace their name. The Afridis were flinging themselves on their own brethren. Many men were wounded before the ties of kinship became tight on the Rifles. All along the line the posts held out. The troops dubbed the chief civil authority. The Government were still trying to make up its mind. A mind that was always faltering. The posts were burnt and sacked. Work of years was torn up overnight.

The fiery cross now sped across to the Tirah. It lies south of the tumbled Afridi lands. There is still an old grey Sikh fortress. North of Miranzai runs for many miles the up-ended mountain barrier of the Samana Range. The major portion of the garrison of a line of mud-built fortlets were frontier militiamen. A crag of mountain intervened between the posts. At Kohat was the best par of a brigade for normal times. Beyond it, South of the Khyber, were the tumbled gorges. Up in Kurram were a very different folk. These were Moslems

professing the Shiah faith. They formed a valuable outpost of order and reliability. But a lashkar was a set loose by fanaticism. It poured into Miranzai and lapped round the various military posts. Kohat itself was threatened. The fort at Sadda was desperately attacked. Hurling defiance, the twenty faced the two thousand. At midnight the ammunition was running low and the fire slackened. The raiders hacked in the iron-bound don with their axes. The garrison retreated to the tower. Then fifty tribal levies came to their rescue. And the hillmen made off. They threw themselves with magnificent disdain unto the troubled and seething countryside. They fought with deadly determination. Then the mob swarmed and swirled round Gulistan. The soldier fought under the deadly fire. The defenders of Saragarhi had a sharp fight with the Afridis. The latter promptly vanished from the hill-tops. The Government of India made up their mind to grasp the nettle danger with the hand of courage. Repentent tribes smoked the pipe of peace. But the strain on the Indian purse mightily increased. Lord Kitchner put the Indian Army on a more modern footing.

The history on the frontier is sad enough to make the angels weep. Just across the Kabul Khel there is a harbour for outlaws and bad hats. One Sailgi, a famous leader of outlaws in every devilry, was there with cther associates. Blanco White marched out to secure the gang. He reached in the midst of hills where stood the outlaws' fort. The cavalry galloped out and surrounded it. The friendlies announced that Sailgi would never surrender. Donald, the political officer, went up under a flag of truce. Terms failed. Mountain guns were brought up to knock away a corner of the tower. Rifles covered every loophole. A practical breach could

not be made. So weak were the little mountain guns, for the mud and stone of the town. At last a breach was made but at a very heavy cost. Many officers were killed in this small unexpected day-to-day fight. Sailgi was found under the debris. His teeth were clenched. His rifle gripped so tight that it took two men to loose it. "This was the end of it, a wretched purpose to put brave men to, even for the needs of the King's Peace, whether two thousand pounds of education of two most gallant English gentlemen, good yeomen like the loyal Sikhs, or brave, intractable ne'er-do-wells"—(Macmunn).

In 1918 the Government embarked on new experiments. It made a large upland cantonment at Razmak, dominating the tribal storm centres. Further, the Government ran a motor road some thirty miles through the country. A Ford car manages to carry a dozen tribesmen to the market. But this cannot be done with rifles and knives stuck over you. So these items are for the first time being left behind. Without them perhaps civilization may peep in. The old Afridi chiefs now live in wealth in Peshawar. Give them work and opportunity. Press on them civilizing things. Let the medical missionary work to his full capacity. Take the young men as much as possible into the forces. Without opportunity the tribes are very dangerous neighbours. "Young men must live, and gorbellied knaves with fat purses are fair game."—(Sir John at Gadshill). The rich capitalists, Hindus or Moslems, fill the bill as gorbellied knaves most adequately. Poverty is the underlying cause of all Pathan troubles. They steal because they must. They commit homicides to avoid suicides. Give them opportunities of life and they will be perfect citizens of India. The system of allowances must he stopped forth-

with. This spoonfeeding policy leads us nowhere. On the contrary, modern industries should be carried into the heart of the tribal areas. And they must be made to feel a gentleman's sense of earning their living, with a taste of modern civilization. Schools and hospitals should be opened everywhere. Free radio sets should be provided to educate and amuse the sturdy gentlemen of the border. Under a sympathetic National Government it is hoped that the hill people will make great strides on the road to progress. Their inborn democratic spirit is likely to come in handy.

Waziristan has been the burning problem of the Frontier since the First Great War. It has been responsible for most of the sensations. In the recent campaign the British put 40,000 men in the field. The Wazirs "have of late years shown in an emphatic form their dislike of the British to whom they owe loyalty" (Sir William Barton). There never has been a census of these British protected subjects. Officially the able-bodied strength of the tribes is given about fifty thousand. Most of the Wazir tribes are nomads. They have to cross the routes easily accessible to British armed forces. A fact which has influenced their behaviour. They are glad of British moral support in grazing disputes. The feuds of Mahsuds and Wazirs has prevented the co-operation of Mahsuds and Wazirs against the Government until the Afghan War of 1919. Then the cup of iniquity was full. From time to time there were fresh outbreaks involving great military demonstration. Several British officers were murdered.

In 1930 political officers felt the coming of a great tribal storm. There had been a bad harvest and economic distress was great. The road network had been completed. Contracts were falling off. There was a

growing pressure on land. The new generation was spoiling for a fight. About this time the influence of Indian Politics began to be felt beyond the border. Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan was recruiting members of Khudai Khidmatgars in 1930. In June of the same year Afridi *lashkars* thousands strong were swarming round the barbed-wire perimeter of Peshawar. Later came the Delhi Pact. The Gandhi-Irwin Pact, according to the British version, had a deplorable effect on the Frontier Afghan officials and tribesmen generally thought the British had renounced power in favour of the Congress. It is surprising that the whole border did not burst into flame. It finally resulted in the outbreak of 1936. There had been trouble with the Utmanzai Wazirs. The chiefs agreed in 1935 to the construction of a road up the Khaisoral valley. Then there was a clash between Hindus and Moslems over a minor Hindu girl who had been kidnapped and converted to Islam. The kidnapper claimed that she was his lawful wife. This was denied by her parents. Matter went to the court. Respect for British authority had waned on the border. An attempt was made to force the hand of the District Magistrate by a huge Moslem demonstration. When that failed, help was sought across the border. The response was immediate. A large *lashkar* was led by the Faqir of Ipi. They assembled in a threatening manner on the border hills of Bannu. Pressure was soon applied by the political authorities. The *lashkar* was induced to disperse.

On November 25, 1936, two brigades moved into the Tori Khel valley to make a political demonstration. The troops met with opposition at the outset. Nineteen were killed, including two British officers, and 102 wounded. This behaviour involved punitive operations.

Meanwhile the Hindu girl was returned to her parents. The Faqir of Ipi could not be captured or muzzled. He took up his quarters in caves at Arsalkot beyond the reach of the British troops. Anti-British agitation had penetrated far and wide. The Faqir was at large. Prolonged peace was irksome to the tribes. Islam was in danger. All tribes were up in arms. Young bloods wanted a fight. On February 6, 1937 Captain Keogh, a Scouts' officer, was murdered by Mahsuds. A series of outrages followed. Kidnapping, murders, burnings. Cattle and sheep were carried off. Lorries were looted. Overwhelming strength of 40,000 men was mobilized in the Waziristan area. There was some heavy fighting. Brilliant night marches. By June 3, 1937 Tori Khel resistance had collapsed. Casualties reached several hundred, including 163 killed.

The Faqir was still active in organizing hostilities. His headquarters were bombed and blown up. He withdrew to the Durand Line. There was a good deal of trouble with mullah Sher Ali, a lieutenant of the Faqir. The Kohat Pass factories were working at top speed to produce rifles. Sher Ali had a *lashkar* of 300 men under his orders and he started attacking posts. As a result of an action the gathering dispersed. Local hostile gangs were overawed. The campaign was officially over by the middle of December 1937. One and a half millions sterling were spent. It was a heavy strain on the public purse. Casualties in killed and wounded were not far short of 1000 men. But Faqir of Ipi, the archenemy of the British Empire, was still at large, plotting mischief. Throughout the operations fighting was of the guerrilla type. Opposing *lashkars* never exceeded 700 tribesmen. Hostile gangs could move rapidly everywhere. Nearly 10,000 troops were employed

on keeping the roads open. The brigade at Wana had to be provisioned from the air. Small detachments were as good as useless. The armament of the tribesmen was immense. Animal transport hampered movement. The *Times of India* sent a correspondent on the Waziristan front. His experiences are interesting :—

"For several hours I watched the advance of the Razmak Brigade down from the Razmak-Narai (Pass) to Razani, a distance of under five miles. Picquets were thrown out on either side of the valley head and with their establishment the brigade was on the march. Suddenly scrappy rifle fire broke out from the scrub covered hillsides, two or three thousand yards on the left flank. The riposte was tremendous. Machine-guns rattled from the picquets and from behind ; a battery unlimbered on a hairpin bend of the twisting, steeply descending road and went into action ; an aeroplane zoomed overhead, spotting for the guns and doing some firing on its own account. No one knew whether the spasmodic——at that distance practically futile—hostile fire came from five, fifty or five hundred tribesmen, but the few shots certainly did not suggest very many hostiles. Yet the vulnerable column had to slow up almost to a halt to thunder at this gnat like evidence of enmity—and it is doubtful if anything happened to anybody."*

So the history of the Frontier is full of thrilling episodes. The Frontier is no doubt the training ground of the imperial forces. Hitherto the firm-footed stand of the *lashkars* and tribal responsibility was a sport easy enough for the British troops. But the new tribal tactic of guerrilla warfare by stray hillmen, evolved under the inspiration of the Faqir of Ipi is too much even for the British nerves. Obviously, the Frontier

**The Times of India.* June 1938.

people are not ignorant of the Russian cammandos. Aeroplanes and machine-guns are helpless before a guerrilla band. It is like breaking a fly upon a wheel, if luckily the troops can break it at all. This gnat-like evidence of enmity is really the most dangerous.

CHAPTER IV

THE PATHAN PSYCHOLOGY

The Pathans are one of the hardiest races that the world has ever seen. Children of the torn and storm-wept hills they have long defied the very hand of civilization. They are well-known for their rough-and-tough, tough-and-tumble existence. Here and there, among the hills, we find sandwiched clans that are truly Durani, the Beni Israil and the people of the Pearl. The Pathans are really the descendants of the old Aryan Colonists who remained in the hills. They grew harder and harder with years of rugged mountain life. As the centuries rolled on, the tides of Islamic culture swept over the frontier. It appealed to their rough temperament. So they readily embraced it. The cult of the sword came home to them. The new religion did not make any difference to them. Islam gave the Pathans nothing new. And nothing old did it take away. So the wild Aryans followed the fanatical Arabs, as wild as they themselves were, and for the standard of Islam on their swords.

The Frontier hills run up into the great whorls of Pamir. No man will live in the whorls. At most he may graze his flocks when the snow melts. And the young tender grass grows anew. There the Indus touches before it leaps from its deep-cut gorges into the plain at Attock. This is the home of the great Yuzufzai group of Pathans. They claim to be the "Sons of Joseph." The Yusufzai clans spread out to the Khyber. When we reach the Khyber, we shake hands with the Afridis. The

Afridis are universally admitted to be of Rajput origin. The historians of Alexander speak of them as Aparœtæ. Alexander was so much cowed of them that he willingly went astray. No longer can the Afridis hack their way in the train of Turkish invader. Kohat is the home of Orakzai tribes. Below Attock are the famous Khattak tribes. The Khattaks are an ethnological link between the Pathan Rajputs and the Panjabi Moslems. In style and appearance they are half way between the two. Up in the Kurram there are two tribes, the Chamkanni and Zarmukhts. They are well-known for their Rob Roy, Chikai the Freelooter. There is another tribe in this direction, called the Turis.

Islam is the principal Frontier force to be reckoned with. Off and on the British authorities are heavily involved in Border troubles. The tribes perpetually imagine that the British hold on India is weakening. They still hope that Kabul would one day send forth the fiery cross. These tribes have never been organized politically. To them Islam is the only loyalty. Civilizing of the tribes—in the royal British terminology—is a tough problem for Delhi and London. Britain has so far found it impossible to absorb the Pathan into the Indian Empire.

The Pathans are fair-skinned. They have an ivory complexion. Their features are well shaped. Good looks are common. They have usually a high standard of intelligence. They are cleverer than the general run of Indian riff-raff. It is not possible to produce a sketch of Pathan character with a few bold strokes. There is a mosaic of clans from the Indus to the Persian border. Of all the Aryan nations and nationalities, the Pathans alone maintain their tribal character, since the Aryan race met at the parting of three ways—three tribal waves

that flooded into Europe, Persia and India.

There is a world of difference between Pathan clans and classes. An educated young Khan would like his English guest ; but a Wazir would crave to cut his throat "in the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful"—the formula from Koran which does indeed sound ironical when put to such inhuman practices. The blunt knife of the Wazir is well-nigh a terror for the stray ladies and children. The Pathan is not confined within the framework of British India. Instead of paying a tribute to the British, he expects the British to pay him a tribute. Very much like an autocrat he exacts his yearly allowances from the Indian Government for the services which he has never rendered. Born and bred up in an atmosphere of independence the psychology of the Pathan is of strong fabric. A rudimentary form of self-government prevails across the Frontier. It develops self-reliance, courage, sobriety and resourcefulness. It gives the Pathan a Spartan outlook. The rivalry of party in the tribal councils sharpen his wit. Contact with British officials improves his understanding of the King's writ. There is no caste in border society. Every Pathan thinks himself as good as another. The political climate of the Frontier is bracing. It agrees remarkably with the tender plant of democracy.

Little children are brought up in fortified homesteads in remote glens. For their earliest infancy they are taught to regard their neighbours with extreme suspicion. Often they share a blood feud with the family living next door. They look upon all strangers as enemies. For them the stern religion of Islam knows no charity. It does nothing to soften the youthful temper. The children learn little of the outside. They receive no education. The infidel government of India is held up

to scorn. Kabul is praised as the citadel of true belief. Pride of race is instilled in the young Pathan almost from his cradle. At fourteen he carries a rifle and attends tribal councils. He rarely meets anyone except members of his family. Thus the breeding of the Pathan is bucolic. Nevertheless he clothes himself in arrogance. He makes no distinction of persons. He is not awed in the presence of high authority. He expresses no wonder at the curiosities of western civilization. It is no easy material to work up into loyalty of the British Empire. The well-to-do yeomen families of the Frontier lead more or less a sophisticated life. The family will send its sons to the school and give them an English education. The boy comes into contact with various aspects of modern civilization. As he goes up to the Islamia College, he takes deepening interest in the newspaper. Politics worms its way into the mentality of the family. They still respect the brave individual Englishmen ; but they lose their faith in the mighty British structure. They work for a Muslim Empire to rise from its ashes. Their loyalty to the British raj is not staunch. The Afridis of the Khyber Rifles in 1897 played a very half-hearted part in the defence of the Landi Kotal. The British officers were withdrawn and the Khyber Pass closed. A high British officer spoke of it very dishearteningly in a lecture on the Frontier. It was delivered before the Viceroy and Simla Society in the following year. He called it "a day of pain, shame, grief and humiliation for every Englishman in India." Tribal levies have, no doubt, on several occasions shown their faithfulness in shooting down tribesmen found cutting telegraph wires.

The Pathan adores force. He gives a qualified loyalty to a government that is prepared to show strength. For

a weak administration he has amused contempt. Of late he has come under the political creed of the Indian National Congress. The rude and crude Pathan, like the martial Sikh, has taken to non-violence as duck takes to water. It is likely that he will work under the influence of Khan Brothers to transmute the wild freedom of the hills into ordered democracy. The sense of patriotism has worked its way into the Pathan mind. They have developed a consciousness of separate political interest. This feeling is strong among the tribes under Afghan rule. And it is shared in the British tribal hinterland. Even the Pathan of the administered area is prepared to throw in his lot with them. There is a tribal republic on the Afghan Frontier. It is an interesting institution from a political point of view. The border tribes have been left practically unmolested. Unmolested in their remote glens and fastnesses for centuries. The great kingdoms have made no continued effort to control them. The Pathans are a gifted people. They are brave, intelligent and self-reliant. They have a strong sense of nationalism. They practise a world religion of great renown. Every man is a soldier ready at any moment of danger. They have all the civic virtues. But they have evolved nothing in the nature of a central authority. They have no real form of self-government. This is the root cause of Frontier troubles. The stability of the system owes much to a disciplined family life. It mirrors the ordered scheme of family relations. Every member is a soldier and lawgiver. There is no regular magistracy. No leadership in the field. There is in most cases complete equality among the tribesmen. The tribal lands are redistributed at intervals of thirty years. It secures tribal cohesion. Also it prevents any tribesman from exploiting his

neighbour. In theory the system of tribal law is complete. There is no law-making in process. If a dispute is not settled by a bullet, the whole tribe gets together. The Mullah prescribes the law. There is no authority to enforce tribal decisions except the tribal *lashkar*. Family life takes after the Roman model. The head of the family is a law unto himself. He is subject to no inter ference. He can put his wife to death for infidelity. He would deal similarly with a daughter who had disgraced her relations. Women across the border are little better than chattel. In theory the sacred law of the Koran is followed. But in practice the family life is regulated by custom. Sons are in a strong position. They are an economic asset. They can defend themselves. Lawlessness is subject to some degree of moral restraint by the Pathan code of honour. Asylum cannot be refused. The Pathan must spare even his enemy if intercession is made. The outlaw who seeks refuge cannot be given up to the British authority. Responsibility for safe conduct once assumed must be carried through even at the risk of life. The code of honour includes vendetta. It is a debt of honour from father to son. The tribesman who does not follow it must face the contempt of his kith and kin.

Younger tribesmen do not abide by the council's decision. The council, of course, means their own committee of elderly men. The tribesman is still a law unto himself. It is rarely possible to get them act together. No wonder, anarchy prevails. And economic progress has been retarded. No system of education exists. There is no sort of culture in the ordinary sense. The long range rifle is a common feature. Poverty accounts for tribal unrest. The British Government has not been able to modify the tribal polity. Attempts

to set up a tribal authority have met with no success. Without it the tribal problem can never be tackled. The tribal territory is known as Yagistan. It means the country of the independent tribes. Yagistan is in political theory a British protectorate. It has not been annexed. The tribes have not accepted the British rule. In many cases they have agreed to allow roads to be constructed through their country. They accept allowances for protecting roads and passes and other nominal services. They use a freehand across the Durand Line and often interfere in dynastic quarrels in Afghanistan. In winter the tribesmen move down in considerable numbers to India for grazing their flocks and herds. This economic dependence of the hill people gives the Government a weapon with which to exercise some measure of control. The British can well-nigh cause them an economic hardship. The trading instinct is still strong among the clans. Ghilzais go to Bengal in winter and hawk cloth round the villages. The Kabuliwalla is a terror to the Bengal peasant. Thus the Frontier is a great living problem. The problem would disappear if these warlike hillmen were loyal subjects of the British Crown. The difficulties have been lessened by the experiments in democracy. In the early years of Moslem rule the Frontier was firmly held. There was a steady infiltration of Afghan elements into the Indus valley. Most of these tribes were nomads. When the Delhi government was strong they were content with the privilege of grazing their flocks and trading. In the days of anarchy the tribal flood swept down and ousted the weaker people. The Indus is now the ethnographical boundary between Central Asia and India. The Yusafzai and kindred tribes conquered Bajaur, Dir, Swat and Buner. The Swati tribes were driven across the Indus

to the eastern slopes of the ridges. Other Indian tribes took refuge in the great mountain mass on the Western Kashmir border. Some of the conquered clans became vassals of the invaders. The old inhabitants of Swat and Bajaur were mostly Buddhists. They were unwarlike and easily overthrown by the highlanders. The Afridis seized Tirah. They enslaved or expelled the Tajiks of Persia. The great Bangash tribe annexed the upper Kurram valley. Further south the Khattaks found a new home. The Bannu oasis was occupied by mongrel races. They were assimilated into Afghan comity. This process of settlement was spread over long periods. Mass movement slowed down during the days of Mughal Empire. On a small scale the movement is going on almost to the present time. The history of the Turis is a good example of tribal surges. They extort their living with infinite labour from the hillside. The most northern agency is Malakand. Here the people have no Afghan affinities. They speak a language of their own. The ruling caste is known as Adamzadas. They show Aryan characteristics. The bulk of the people are known as "Fakir-i-Miskin" (indigent poor). These are a listless unwarlike type. Probably these are descendants of the old Buddhists who once swept the countryside. The wild independence of the Pathans is less marked in Dir, Swat and Bajaur. Life here is less hard than in the barren Mohmand hills.

Bajaur is a centre of intrigue and propaganda. Propaganda against all ordered government on both sides of the Durand line. It is a happy hunting ground of the political Mullah. It is difficult to counter the activities of these fanatics. The Wali of Swat is carrying out a policy of disarmament. His rise to power is of great importance from the point of view of the pacification of

the border.

The Black Mountain adjoins the territory of the Wali of Swat. It is so called from the dark forests of fir that cover its slopes. The eastern sides are held by the original people of Swat. They are not Pathans at all. The western ridge is the homeland of Yusafzai tribes. The Black Mountain tribes are less warlike and weak in number. There is a constant struggle among small tribal chiefs. The most important of these is the Nawab of Amb. He enjoys the unique distinction of being an independent chief across the Indus. The Nawab of Amb has an arms factory. He manufactures rifled cannon. This cannon can throw a solid ball 3000 yards. It is a useful weapon for pounding to pieces a tribal fortress.

The great Yusafzai tribe holds most of the Peshawar valley. The whole of the Mardan district is in their hands. The total fighting strength of the tribe is estimated at 170,000 men. The Yusafzai of Mardan enlist readily in the army. The spirit of adventure and enterprise is characteristic of the tribe. They seized the rich district of Rohilkhand during the decay of the Mughal power. The country was parcelled out among a group of chiefs and their followers. The Nawab of Rampur is still a Yusafzai.

The total fighting strength of the Mohmands is about fifteen thousand. They go to the hills in summer to escape the heat. Many of them are tenants of the Khans. Mohmand country consists mostly of grim and forbidding hills. On the Afghan side the country is less hilly. Afghan Mohmands are always spoiling for a fight against the British. They often take part in the Frontier riots. The British cannot bomb and burn their villages. They are obliged to respect the political boundary. They may protest to the

Afghan Government ; but the Afghan Government never calls them to account. Afghan Mullahs are often responsible for stirring up trouble in the British sphere of influence. The upper Mohmands are in any case a truculent crowd. Quite an inflammable material for the fanatical Mullah. The lower Mohmands receive allowances from the British Government for their good behaviour. Attacks on these clans have been frequent in recent years. At times British assistance has been necessary.

Tirah is the Afridi homeland. It is a huge mountain mass split up by several open valleys. It has a general direction from west to east. The most important valleys are the Bazar and Bara. Most of Tirah is snow-bound in winter. Most of the Afridis move down to Peshawar. There are eight principal clans of the Afridis. They have a fighting strength of fifty-one thousand. The country is poor and not self-supporting. Military service is denied to the Afridi tribesmen. Their frequent examples of disloyalty have embittered the British mind. At one time there were four thousand Afridis under the Union Jack. Loss of income is a heavy blow to the tribesmen. It affects their economic life heavily. The influence of the Mullahs is a disturbing factor in Afridi politics. The Afridi is hard-headed and possessed of more common sense than the Pathan. He is less liable to be swayed by religious fanaticism. Nevertheless much of the tribal trouble lies at the door of the priest. Southern Tirah is occupied by the Orakzai tribes. Their fighting strength is about thirty thousand. They hold the Samana ridge and parts of the Kohat district along the foothills. A section of the tribal community are Shiah Moslems. It renders them obnoxious to the Sunni majority. Faced with Sunni hostility they are

strongly in favour of the British connection. Clan quarrels led to British interference. The territory wrested from the Shiahs was restored under a British guarantee.

The Orakzais on the Kohat give trouble from time to time. In 1897 they threw in their lot with the insurgents. They attacked the British forts and captured an outpost. In the end they were defeated heavily. They stood firm in 1919 during the Afghan War and did not take sides. The Orakzais are more enterprising than the Afridis. Thousands of them are working in Bombay in the mills. They have also joined the British ships as lascars. They remit the money to their homes. It helps to maintain their families in comfort. The Bangash tribe hold a wide stretch of country along the Miranzai valley of Kohat. Its fighting strength is six thousand. Another great tribe of the settled districts is the Khataks. The tribe could muster 32,000 able-bodied men. The leading Khan is the Khan of Teri.

Tribal settlements cluster round the glens of the Sufed Koh. Mountain streams emerge into the plain. The soil is fertile. The fruits grow in abundance. Pine tree groves of noble dimensions fringe the streams. Kurram competes with Kashmir. The people are attractive in many ways. The tribe politically dominant is the Turis. They have ousted the Bangash from most of the valley. They can muster some six thousand men, one and all ready to fight. They are a well-built, good-looking race. Their women, with ivory complexions, are singularly attractive. The Afghans conquered the valley in the middle of the last century. The British ejected them in 1879. They are said to have welcomed the British with open arms. But the British withdrew their forces a couple of years later. The Turis are a faction-ridden people. Self-government proved hopeless

among them. Complete anarchy followed the departure of the British. A strong force of Militia was raised in 1893. It has been more or less staunch and reliable. The valley has great strategic importance. It is a bulwark against the Khost tribes who are the backbone of Afghan military strength. It also commands the backdoor into Tirah.

Waziristan is a tangle of difficult mountains. The Mahsuds and the Darwesh Kheyl share the country between them. The fighting strength of the Mahsuds is put at 18,000 men, with at least 14,000 effective rifles. The Darwesh Kheyl can muster 27,000 of whom about 15,000 are said to possess modern rifles. Every man is an adept at guerrilla warfare. These facts indicate the military difficulty of the Government. Several sections of the Darwesh Kheyl have settlement in Afghanistan. They can draw supplies from the Afghan side of the boundary. If necessary, they can seek refuge there till the storm has blown over. Anarchy is more intense in Waziristan than elsewhere. The Wazirs are more fanatical. Less easy to handle. They have been less accessible to British influence. Since 1852 the British Government has invaded their territory seventeen times. The operation of 1919-20 was the most desperate and costly in the history of the Frontier. The recent campaign was on a similar scale. The British occupation has stabilized existing conditions. But for the British they would have ejected the degenerate Bannuchis. The Dawars of the Tochi valley would have met a similar fate at the hands of Wazirs. Hemmed in all sides the Mahsuds with their growing numbers are finding life increasingly difficult. Before the advent of the British, the Wazirs had established themselves strongly on the fringes of the Bannu district. In fact, the Wazirs

occupy a strip of country from the Gumal to the Kohat border. They are the gate-keepers of the Derajat. Under the National Government they may live up to their responsibilities. In winter the Wazir clans move from the high ranges to the open country. Thus they are exposed to reprisals from the British forces. But this action is less easy now than it was a generation ago. These days the Wazirs possess a large number of weapons of precision, and this tells even on the courage of trained soldiers. The British border authorities have often to take in hand the redress of British subjects for outrage by Wazir clans. In the eighties the Afghan authorities decided to occupy salient points in Waziristan. They were forestalled by the British authorities who hastily seized Jandola and pushed out an Afghan post. The Amir saw that further attempts would be futile.

The North-West Frontier has long formed a part of the Afghan Kingdom. It was united by sentiment and loyalty as well as by race. The national spirit is deeply strong in the Pathan. The British hierarchy cannot wean him from nationalism. He is apt to fall foul of the British on flimsiest grounds. At the outset the order was soon restored. The system held good during the Mutiny. After that the service was undermanned. The officers had little time to get into touch with the border tribes. The British judicial system with its tribe of lawyers was utterly unsuited to the tribesmen. The vendetta stained the province with blood. It was next to impossible to secure a conviction. Serious crimes went mostly unpunished. Litigation led to new riots. Murders involved new blood feuds. The rigidity of the British police widened the breach. "The tribesman of the hills regards the British administrative system with

intense dislike. The regular police are an object of aversion. The last thing he would wish would be to come within the sphere of influence of the British law-courts ; of the corrupt Indian official. Had the administration been moulded on less rigid lines, had it been congenial to the administered tribes themselves, it might have led to a gradual *rapprochement* between the two wings of the Border country, the unadministered tribes and those under direct British rule." (Sir William Barton). In 1872 the inelasticity of the legal system was relaxed. Trial by *jirgah* or tribal jury was substituted. A term of imprisonment took the place of capital punishment. It has been of the greatest value to administration. The *jirgah* was not bound by the strict rules of evidence. The British law imposed on the regular courts found no favour in the tribal jury. Nevertheless the new system was wonderfully successful.

The British control ends at the foothills. The tribes beyond are no man's children. The tribes in the mountain belt pay homage to nobody, as it has already been stated. There have been forty British expeditions between 1849 and 1880. Troops were, as a rule, withdrawn promptly. It was a burn-and-scuttle policy. Tribal responsibility is the keystone of the arch of frontier administration. Action of the kind often prevents serious trouble. The tribes soon feel the pinch if excluded from the plains in the cold months. It is a useful means of exerting pressure on a tribe which seems bent on mischief. The big Khans are middlemen in maintaining official relations with the tribes. The result is in many cases a series of intrigues which lead to further trouble. Much of the money spent on the allowances and tribal entertainments remains in the pockets of the middlemen. Several families in this way have achieved

unmerited opulence. The policy of the close border has been a hopeless failure. The tribes feel that they have no lot in the *pax Britannica.* They think that the British Government has no use for them. They do not make any display of loyalty. When they respond to arms, the military situation naturally becomes complicated. The Afridis harass the British lines of communication. There is no hope of pacification until the tribes make up their mind between Delhi and Kabul. The Afghan Government, like the British, has never exercised anything beyond a shadowy suzerainty over the tribes. India has paid in millions of money and hundreds of lives for the blunder of 1880. It was a golden opportunity during the Afghan War to settle the tribal question once for all. After the Afghan War it was desired to place the Frontier under a military governor. The scheme was supported by Lord Roberts and some leading politicians. But it was nicely shelved, as it very well deserved. The advocates of a forward policy gradually made headway in the eighties.

The border burst into flame in 1897. The whole dramatic episode has already been mentioned at full length in the chapter—*The Frontier Fires.* The threat to tribal independence was the principal cause. The fanatical preachings of the Mullahs provided the direct stimulus. Afghan troops were frequently seen in the tribal ranks. Later on, in 1917, the Mahsuds revolted. An arduous campaign had to be undertaken in the heat of the summer. The troops were mostly unseasoned. The use of the aeroplane was made for the first time in Waziristan. It had a demoralizing effect. The dreaded *Jihad* was proclaimed from Kabul in the spring of 1919. The new Amir, Amanullah, was anxious to attract popularity. So he led his people in an unprovoked attack

on India. His appeals did not excite the enthusiasm expected. His forces were flung back in the Khyber. British troops advanced into Afghan territory. The Khyber Rifles melted away; but the Afridis did not break into a revolt. The Afridis and the Orakzais sat on the fence. The Afghan armies were scattered like chaff. Had they stood a few days on the Indian territory, 100,000 tribesmen would have arisen against the British authority.

Revolt spread like wildfire in Waziristan. A firm attitude was adopted by the British authority. The tribes were heavily punished. They were compelled to accept the terms. These were the thin edge of the wedge in their independence. A strong brigade was located at Razmak. Roads were constructed and the cantonments were linked up. Wana was occupied by regular troops. The forward policy school came into their own. The Government refused to form the Khyber Rifles. Tribal levies were recruited to police the new roads. The transborder tribesmen had long been enlisted in the Indian Army. Their pays and pensions swelled the tribal treasures. Their strong element in some regiments hindered in frontier operations. In Mesopotamia and other places the Pathans gave proofs of their disloyalty to the British Crown. Hence the Government has altogether stopped the recruitment of Pathans in the Army. It is a heavy blow to the tribal purse.

The Afghan borderland is central Asian. It is not Indian in its characteristics. For a long time they had no feeling of solidarity with India. Peshawar buzzes with dance and din of Pathan society. It is held and owned by one of the strongest races in Asia. The Frontier is a land of contrasts. It is a realm of light and

shade. Romance is wedded to hard reality. East and West meet behind a thin screen. The cultivated fields are emerald-green everywhere. Intellectual darkness brood over the border hills. The Ghilzai traders, passing over the hills, are splendid specimens of humanity. They are tall and bearded, with rosy complexions. The women are handsome and of equally fine physique. In their scheme of life they belong to another world. No doubt, they hate the western car that smothers them with dust. The road winds through dark and dreary hills of the Khyber Pass. Traffic in the Pass closes at sunset. After dark the authorities no longer guarantee the safety of the traveller. For long the British military stations on the Frontier were unenclosed. Then the Pathans started a new trade. They kidnapped the British ladies and held them up to ransom. It put the Government on their guard. Now the border cantonments are enclosed with barbed-wire fencing. Despite fencing and policing the border thief defies precaution. He crosses the barbed wire by means of ladders, waylays and cuts up a patrol. And escapes with its rifles. In the bazars of Peshawar one meets picturesque crowds. Pathans from every part of the Frontier walk cheek by jowl.

Kohat Pass is a romantic highway. Here is a gun factory under the nose of John Bull. The workmen employed are generally from the Punjab. Rifle barrels are bored out of soft metal. The rifling soon wears out. An enterprising Afridi headman employed the factory for a new purpose. Excellent Afghan counterfeit coins were minted and smuggled across the Frontier right into the heart of Afghan territory. The British authority put a stop to it. There is another romantic story of the Pathans associated with Kohat. On a stormy night in February 1923, a gang of Pathans raided the armoury

of the police at Kohat and carried away a splendid haul of sixty-four rifles worth £2,000 in the Frontier market. The rifles were concealed in a fortified hamlet. A counter-raid was secretly arranged and carried out successfully. Thirty-five of the rifles were discovered in an underground cellar. A lot of other stolen property was also found. The gang was infuriated. They thought their womenfolk had been molested. They raided the house of Major Ellis and carried away his daughter. This is the origin of barbed wire cantonments in the Frontier. The rescue of the girl was ultimately effected. A fine of Rs. 50,000 was imposed on the Pass Afridis.

Land and love are the main springs of action on the Frontier. An explosive brand of Islam is equally potent. The land hunger of the Pathan is very strong. Land can be wrung from the hillside at the expense of infinite labour. A Pathan will do almost anything for money. Half the blood feuds are due to women. Outlawry makes everyday life something of a gamble for many frontier men. "Romance still lingers in the Frontier hills despite the stern realities of life. The infatuation of a Pathan for a young Hindu girl led indirectly to the war in Waziristan ; here a pretty face moved, not a thousand ships like Helen of Troy, but at least two British divisions. The Pathan is indeed a great lover, always ready to risk his life for a pair of bright eyes". The elderly Khan with a long purse equips himself with a young and attractive bride. Young women often risk disfigurement for the embraces of a young lover. The outlaws often carry off beautiful girls : Hindus or Muslims, whomsoever they can lay their hands on. Nothing is true of the Pathan psychology than the homely English saying : Everything is fair in love and war. Life for a Pathan is nothing but an endless series

of love-making and war-waging. So for him his way of life, however crude it may appear to us, is perfectly fine and fair by the canons of Western civilization. A Pathan is a child of the circumstances. He lives by the rifle and must follow the cult of the sword. Spoiled by allowances of John Bull, instead of being weaned from his rifle, the Pathan has been all the more wedded to it. What the Pathan needs is not a silver rupee but a silver road to civilization. A bit of culture, extracted from his own soil, will do him more good than a windfall of silver coins from the dark clouds over the hills of Simla.

SECOND PART

CHAPTER V

THE FRONTIER FLAME

AFTER the flame comes the fire. That is pretty true of Nature. But in the political firmament, things are not always as they ought to be. The Froniter flame follows the Frontier fire. Hitherto the Frontier has been under loose, purposeless, go-as-you-please bullets of the tribal, headstrong youngsters. The British programme of peaceful penetration and the Congress propaganda of the nationalistic drive has not been all in vain. It is but recently that a steady flame of patriotism, national as well as international, has taken the place of flippant fire on the Frontier hills. Nevertheless, the horizon is heavy with haze. In the storm-dust of many-headed and many-handed propaganda, a writer with un-jaundiced eyes cannot see his face. There is the pro-British propaganda by the efficient screws of the bureau-cratic machine, and there is the anti-British drive by the ever-alive hands and ears of the Afghanistan Government. There is the anti-British spadework by the slippery Russian agents, and anti-Red drive by the red tape, because it must not be forgotten that Indian Frontier is the International Frontier, the boundary of the British Empire, the hedge where light and darkness meet, where day and night bid each other goodbye, because the sun never sets on the British Common-wealth. Last but not the least, there is a grim poli-tical duel between the Muslim League and the Indian National Congress. The former has the official bless-ings, support and soft corner. The other has not.

One of the earliest movements in the Frontier has been the Pan-Islamic propaganda. The Muslims has always been dreaming of the rebirth of the empire of Islam. This feeling has always been burning brightly in the Muslim world. There have been many secret societies at work, such as the *Khuddami Kaaba*, the Servants of Mecca. Mecca being the point to which all Muslims pray. Mecca has always been the pointer of Muslim aspirations. There has long been a fanatic colony on the Black Mountain. When Turkey joined the Central Powers in the last Great War, there were danger signals on the Frontier. Prompt action by the British kept the province on an even keel. The *Khuddami Kaaba* has secret adherents among the rich Muslim trading classes in Peshawar. Educated Muslim young men, heavy with economic rebuffs, might talk sedition among the people. Now and then such things do leave a ripple on life of the border. During the last War the Turkish agents tried to create trouble. The Persian attitude and its military cordon were responsible for putting an end to their activities. Nevertheless, the War left an aftermath of trouble on the Frontier. There was the undying mischief of *Mullahs* and *Moulvis*, preachers and teachers.

The Rowlatt Act caused riots in the Punjab. The Frontier was within an ace of following its example. Peshawar saw an outbreak. The Afghan agents were quick to seize the opportunity, as the Amir launched his attack on the defences of the Khyber. The trouble was nipped in the bud. The leaven could not spread to the countryside. The failure of the Afghan attack led to widespread disturbances. These troubles were more serious than the Afghan invasion. Tribes, one after the other, showed their naked disloyalty to the

British. Besides, the Frontier was infected with Indian politics. Moslem India mourned the downfall of Turkey. It broke into angry recriminations. The Khilafat Party, backed by Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress, raised Muslim resentment to fever pitch. The preaching of the Ali Brothers caused an uprising in Malabar. Another result was the *hijrat* movement. Thousands of Muslims came to believe that it was a sin to live any longer under the British. Sincerely believing, many Muslims crossed the Frontier into Afghanistan. Hundreds of Pathan families sold their hearths and homes and followed the vanguard of Pilgrims up the Khyber Pass. I was a primary schoolboy at Pabbi (Peshawar District) in those stirring days. On my way to and from school I was deeply impressed by the sight of these holy caravans. From the Indus to the Khyber there was one unending line of carts and carriages. I remember little Pathan children chanting Koran in the quietitude of dusk on the verge of Pabbi. The tented carts with old Allahdin's Lamps linger in my memory. These dupes of destiny received a cold shoulder from the Afghan officials. Back they turned to their villages in the blazing heat of summer. This movement ought not to have been allowed to develop in the Frontier. But the religious movement made a rapid headway. And the Government was touchy about burning their fingers between the Pathan and their God. Nevertheless the Government was exposed to a good deal of criticism. This an all-out pilgrimage naturally had an unsettling effect on the border. The families to and from Kabul naturally suffered a great psychological shock.

The reforms of 1920-21 were not extended to the Frontier. The tribal situation was not favourable. It

was necessary to keep the administration in official hands. However it be, the idea of exclusion was not tasteful to the Frontier intellectuals. The situation in Afghanistan was also not encouraging. The delay in reaching at a treaty inspired a fear of fresh trouble. Several hundreds of Pathan deserters from the army were sheltered under the protection of Afghan offi-cialdom. In 1920 and 1921 these refugees committed a series of outrages in British territory. They cut up detachments of Indian troops and captured rifles. A reign of terror prevailed at Bannu. The situation improved with the signature of the peace treaty with Afghanistan in the following year. The military grip of Britain on the Frontier was as strong as ever. Intensive bombing brought the peace with Mahsuds. Political atmosphere improved considerably. In 1925 the Khyber Railway was opened. Now the Afridis had the added responsibility of protecting the railway track. The allowances paid to them were increased. The Khyber Rifles were not revived after their desertion in the Afghan War. Nevertheless, the British made one friendly gesture. They enlisted nine hundred Afridis in the Army. It is a part of peaceful penetration for the British not to harm the tribes economically even if the tribes harm the British politically. Economic hardships should not be inflicted on the tribes who are already hard enough economically.

The Haji of Turangzai was largely responsible for uprising in the Mohmand country. He was heartfully supported by mullahs from the Afghan side. One of his staunchest followers is Saiyyad Akbar, known as the stormy petrel of Tirah. The Saiyyad saw in the Khyber Railway a nice little opportunity of working up hostility to the British. The railway was consi-

dered as a threat to tribal independence. And this is hardly a misstatement, because roads and railways are part and parcel of peaceful penetration. Nevertheless, the Saiyyad was not successful in leading the hostilities. Crowds mustered and demonstrations ware held, but the sober elements stood aloof. The *lashkar* dispersed without committing itself. There was another trouble with the Mohmands in 1927. It was engineered by the Faqir of Alingar. The Faqir soon achieved an enviable popularity. He was ambitious enough to proclaim a *jihad*. But unluckily he received no co-operation from the Haji of Turangzai who, with his wiser outlook, saw the futility of such an enterprise lit large. The Faqir, however, succeeded in getting a *lashkar* of two thousand men together. Down he moved towards the Peshawar border. The Mohmands were discouraged by a bombing attack from the air. Besides they lacked support from the Lower Mohmands. The *lashkar* melted away. And the Faqir faded into the background. There was a fresh wave of agitation as a result of the disappointment due to Simon Commission. The Rangila Rasul case led to Hindu-Muslim clash in India. It had its communal reactions in the Tirah. The Afridis expelled all Hindus from their limits. But when the irritation died away, the Hindus were allowed to return. It shows the dependence of Muslim majority on Hindu minority in the Frontier. The Hindu client is an economic necessity throughout the length and breadth of the province.

There are opportunities for primary education in the transborder agencies. A small leavening of higher education has helped to awaken interest among the tribes in politics. They have begun to ask questions about the Frontier as well as India, the Indian Govern-

ment and the Frontier Government, the Frontier Gandhi and Mahatama Gandhi. The borderland is losing its isolation as a result of British road-making policy and the Congress capacity of using the roads. In the recent years there has been much political propaganda. on wheels rather than on horseback or more likely on foot, as was previously the case. There is now a net work of motor roads in Waziristan and elsewhere. Another vital factor of political enlightenment is the newspaper. The Haji of Turangzai used to publish a paper of his own in Pushto. It was appropriately called *The Flame. The Flame* was really a flame of political enlightenment according to the mental light of its editor. Anti-British, but patriotism. But all patriotism is not anti-British. Nor all anti-British flames are necessarily the beacons of patriotism. But now the uncouth Pathan has also got radios, due to generous British drive. Pushto programmes are regularly broadcast from Peshawar and Delhi A. I. R. Moscow and Berlin are not behind time in making use of the British sets for their own purposes. And now the *hujiras*, the tribal clubs, up in the hilly villages may catch voices from the four corners of the world. It must be a mighty brain wave for unschooled Pathans to sift Tokyo Truth from London Logic, and I almost see them scratch their heads, as lies and counter-lies, deliciously sweetened in their own language, bang the mud walls of their earthy clubs. There is Abdul Karim gurgling his hookah and puffing his reddened cheeks, as he hears a Pushto half-an-hour Berlin. Here is Abdul Rahim sitting squat and sad, as B.B.C. gives him an idea, but I am not sure, if B.B.C. has got Pushto programme. Anyhow, every tribal breast relishes the Pushto sing-song items with war news and views from

Peshawar. After all, the British Raj is not going to crumble. Radio is the non-stop reminder of British might to the children of the hills, lest they play naughty. If previously Britain ruled the waves, now she talks order to them. Sir William Barton tells us beautifully how the logic of Provincial Autonomy and the Congress sweeping the polls worked itself out in the Pathan mind : "From what they have been hearing for years past in the Frontier bazars and elsewhere they not unnaturally conclude that the British power is on the wane—could there be better evidence of growing weakness than that the British should have handed over power in India to the Brahmin ? Pathan mentality could not be expected to grasp the idea of a partnership of Britain and India, designed to lead India along the path to complete self-government." I do not know if Mahatma Gandhi is a Brahmin ; but if he really once was, I feel sure that the Brahmins have long dismissed him from their fold. At any rate, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan is not a Brahmin. Neither is he a *mullah* commissioned by His Majesty the King of Afghanistan. The Frontier Gandhi is a plain Khan and tribesmen do not doubt his sincerity. Coming from the Aligarh University, the Frontier Khan is no blind leader, no mean propagandist, no self-seeker. Unlike *mullahs* and *moulvis*, nor is he the enemy of Britain. A constitutional reformer like Mahatama Gandhi he has always been acclaimed a British friend. Under his inspiration, I feel, the Pathan is better informed than we give him credit for. But the primary education must step up with political enlightenment.

Where the reforms of 1920 were denied to the Frontier Province, the Frontier Congress carried out a vigorous propaganda. It spread like wildfire. Among

the Pathans it caused discontent. The reforms had to be extended. The Simon Commission was instructed in 1928 to take up the question of constitutional advance forthwith. A thorough enquiry recommended the Morley-Minto type. Elected and "selected" members were brought about in equal proportions. Election represented the fat landlordism of Khans. Legislative powers were limited. Law and order were reserved. It did not allay the irritation among the political-minded. Rather it enhanced it. Congress emissaries poured into the province. Easy money was forthcoming for political purposes. Movement spread beyond the border. The Frontier could not contain the flood of patriotism within itself. India was filled to overflowing with the all-pervading national spirit. Congress move penetrated into the Black Mountain. The Faqir of Alingar was ready at hand. Immediately he had a *lashkar* on foot in Bajaur. But the British Air Force was equally prompt to swoop down. And no crowds can stand a baptism of fire from the blue firmament. In half an hour, the coast was as clear as a desert.

Next, the historic salt march of Mahatma Gandhi came home to the tribesmen. During my last visit to Bombay I visited the salt pans, beyond the Entop Hill, where the sacred feet had tread. "There you stand on the Entop Hill for a moment," observed Mr. Gill, now in I. A. F., "and here from the tops of Matunga through my telescope I will see you as a Statue of Liberty !" And had he known that he was shortly going to join the Air Force, he might as well have added, "and bomb you !" Anyhow the Entop Hill, with a silver view of dazzling salt pans under the full glow of December sun, which I was then wondering at, had its harvest of reactions right in the heart of my

homeland. Was the naked Faqir defying the British law ? Indian politics was feverishly discussed in the Frontier villages. Was the British Empire really in its last breath ? The Pathans were sharpening their blunt knives in the Kisa Khani, the storm-centre of romance, the West End of Peshawar. If a man at Lahore wants to have an idea of Kisa Khani, let him visit the Landa Bazar. There one meets the seething riff-raff of humanity. The Kisa Khani Bazar of Peshawar, the Lunda Bazar of Lahore, and the Chor Bazar of Bombay, have something untellably romantic about them. But here we are concerned only with Kisa Khani, the thermometer of Pathan temperament. In the Salt march of Mahatama Gandhi, the Kisa Khani—the 10 Downing Street of the Pathan World—saw the spinelessness of the British. Islam has always been in danger, and it was a time to strike a blow for Islam. The temptation was too great to be resisted. The Afridis, the romantic tribesmen, swarmed down to Peshawar, and of course flooded the Kisa Khani. Favoured by the shelter of high maize crops, these children of simplicity laid a moral battle-dore siege to Peshawar, just like little babes hedging around their grand-aunt. Finding the British lion roaring overhead, they made off for their mountain haunts. When the tribesmen use their wits, they are very much far from being used as cat's paw by selfish politicians. The reactions of Indian politics are not welcome to the Frontier officials. They have caused, they assert, a setback to the policy of peaceful penetration.

Political influence in the Frontier has gained momentum during the last decade. It has long been a pawn in the political game of the Muslim League. For them Islam is perpetually in danger, and Indian Unity is a direct threat to their hearths and homes.

It is nothing short of a miracle that the Congress has gained a foothold in an overwhelmingly predominant Muslim province. The Frontier has lent no ear to "Islam in danger", because the Frontier knows that Islam is not in danger. At least not in the Punjab. And certainly not in the Frontier. In Afghanistan, of course, danger to Islam is unthinkable. Safe on both the Frontiers and thoroughly fool-proofed, the Pathan has a liking and leisure for thinking calmly and quietly over Indian politics. In 1932 the North-West Frontier was lifted to the rank of an Indian province. Sir Abdul Quaiyyum was the first Prime Minister of the Pathans. He was a retired political officer of great experience and exceptional ability. Above all, he was ready to work with, not against the officials. From the British point of view, Sir Abdul Quaiyyum was as hardy as Sir Sikander Hyat Khan. But there was just a touch of difference. While Sir Sikander was popular among all the communities, more or less, Sir Quaiyyum could not win the confidence of even his own. Perhaps the difference was psychological. But the psychological difference had a physiological background. Their political outlook was the outcome of their ages. Sir Sikander was young and could work himself up to the level of a new constitution. But the already-retired Sir Quaiyyum was rather old and needed a prop in his olden days. It was too late for him to change the angle of his vision. "Here it may be observed", says Sir William Barton, "that despite his services to the Province on the London Conference, despite his experience and his enthusiasm for the political advance of his community, Sir Abdul Qauiyyum's appointment was not popular. He had been too long a power behind the throne, suspected for too

long of a greater responsibility for the acts of the administration than was really the case, to command general support from the electorate." Anyhow, Sir Sikander as well as Sir Quaiyyum have reached the kingdom of God. May God rest their souls in peace!

In September 1934 the Faqir of Alingar was again on the warpath. There arose an unfortunate conflict between him and the Haji of Turangzai. The Faqir carried out a vigorous propaganda among the Mohmands. The Haji stood aloof. The Faqir, in his usual foolhardy way, wanted to throw a gauntlet to the British. He still lived in the Victorian Age and still believed, in spite of numerous rebuffs, that the Mohmands, under a charmed flag, could defeat the mighty British Empire in one-day pitched combat. The Haji of Turangzai, a near relative of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, was wise. He knew exceedingly well that any flee-bite to John Bull will only mean another milestone on the road of peaceful penetration. More rifles will have to be surrendered. More roads will be built in Tirah and the wild freedom of the hills will be cruelly imprisoned. But the Faqir was not the man to listen. He carried. He had no respect for the kins of the Frontier Gandhi. None for his policy. He cared not a jot for the code of non-violence. A battle took place between the crude Mohmand rifles and the British modern machines. The Haji of Turangzai was right in his caution. The road was extended to the foot of the Nahakki Pass. Every defeat means a new road for the tribes. That is indeed a curious type of punishment. Quite un-understandable by the civilized people. How can a means of communication, a necessity of civilized life, be a "punishment"? That is a romance of peaceful penetration. The hillmen do

not want the British to poke their noses into their landscapes more than it is absolutely essential. At any rate, the dust and din of wheeled life is not a welcome feature of modern civilization. The West might relish it. And the East might ape the West. But the evils of the roaded culture cannot be denied. The quicker we move, the "louder" we hear, the faster we talk (on A. I. R. at least !) the slower we breathe, the shorter we live, the prompter we die. Locomotives have made our lungs go faster than our legs. If this be the Pathan philosophy of life, I like it. And follow it. And support it. And the ink in my pen will be always at their disposal. My pen cannot shoot ; but then the Mohmand rifles can no more wound the British lion than my nib. Haji of Turangzai had learnt to be wise. And let the tribes not bury the wisdom of the dead. Before the roads were built in the Mohmand country, it was agreed that "Government would refrain from interference in the internal, social and political affairs of the tribes." The Indian National Congress might yearn for such an heartening treaty after the do-and-die freedom fight of 1942 ! Certainly, the British can be generous, if they want to be.

A school was constructed at Chora in the Bazar Valley. This was done in response to a tribal request. This shows that the tribesman is now gasping for sweetness and light : Arnold's remarkable definition of culture. They do not want any more to grope in the dark for ever and a day in the cell of illiteracy. Roads contracts were also in tribal hands. The roads were to be built with British money and tribal men, because the tribes must have the wherewithal to meet the cost of war. The tribes must be paid in contracts and allowances what is to be got out of them

in the form of fines, because no tribesman will surrender his rusty rifle unless he had money enough to buy a new one in the black market.

Once again the trouble loomed on the horizon in the autumn of 1935. That year is historic in the history of India. The India Act of 1935 is an important milestone, and the trouble started then is still afoot all over the country. The Indian National Congress is behind the bars just for that apple of discord bestowed by the Mother of Parliaments. With Act of '35 came the revival of agitation in the Frontier. The border became unsettled. The people lost their peaceful come-and-go existence. The tribes began to yawn after a brief interval of rifle-rest. Congress programme of political penetration made a rapid headway. Soon it came face to face with the British policy of "peaceful" penetration. For a time they penetrated into one another, almost dove-tailed, when the Congress swept the polls and the Congressite became the friends of the British Empire. But before that happened, the Afridis showed their teeth. Opposition was led by enlightened *mullahs*. Picquets were posted on the roads. The road-making processes were given up. All contracts were withheld. The school at Chora was burnt. That was a first-class blunder, almost a cultural suicide. But as far as I understand, no bullet was fired. That was in letter and spirit of the Congress principle of non-violence. Greater fidelity should not be expected of the tribes to the Frontier Gandhi. After all, they cannot stand the strain too long.

Agitation also spread to Waziristan. It has been long a terror for the British bull-dog. The work of the political officers in pacifying the countryside was upset, so it is stated. But really what that pacification

was I am quite at a loss to grasp. A social reformer may gasp in vain. Razmak and Wana were occupied by regular troops. The work of motor roads was policed by tribal levies. The British political hold was tightened. The local authorities were rosy with optimism. Powerful forces garrisoned the countryside. The Mohmands were in a mood to settle down to a peaceful career. The British efforts were exercising a strong civilising influence. The tribes were basking in the sunshine of hedged-in peace. The Mahsuds once more resisted the gloriously sweetened coffee-toffee temptation of throwing in their lot with the mild-minded bureaucracy. It was little short of a tragedy that British hopes were shattered on the knife-edged rock of 1935 Act. British India had to foot a bill which ran into a million sterling.

The Shahid Ganj also lit a wide fire on the Frontier hills. I do not know what the Sikhs have gained in converting into a Gurdawara what our Muslim brothers—I will not call them brethren, because they are really our kith and kin—worshipped as a Mosque. If one is a house of God, is not the other ? I wonder if every house is not a temple, every heart a priest, and every word in the dictionary a name of God. Being a Sikh myself, I feel all the more justified in criticizing the action of our leaders—rather the misleaders—so far as the tragic episode of Shahid Gunj is concerned. It makes me droop in shame. We may be Sikhs for ought I know, but the demolition of Shahid Gunj Mosque was as far from Sikhism as Lahore is from London where the Privy Council was pleased to give the verdict in our favour. Not only an historic monument has disappeared, but just imagine the lives that have been lost and the bad blood that has been

created. It would have been no pleasure for the Sikh martyrs of Shahid Gunj—"The Treasure of the Martyr" where a million Sikhs are said to have been done to death by the Muslim rulers, because they refused to embrace Islam—to see more men martyred over their grave, the well full of their bones. There were Hindu-Muslim riots all over the country. Fanaticism was excited on both sides of the border. One of our houses was burnt by the Pathans at Nowshera City. Incidentally the Shahid Gunj is in the Lunda Bazar and our house was on the Lunda River. There is an association of ideas between the two. But I am not worrying over our property. Nor do I mean to say that the Muslims have not demolished our Gurdawaras and Temples in the past. History is full of their outrages. In fact, the Muslim invaders have left not a relic of Aryan culture and Buddhist pagodas in the Punjab and the Frontier, because it must not be forgotten that the Frontier was once the bulwark of Buddhism. In order to get an idea of ancient architecture we have to go South where at Trivandrum, I wondered in perfect bewilderment, quite overwhelmed with the architectural beauty of the temples. We must stop raising up and razing down Mosques. Temples and Gurdwaras, because both ways they are equally dangerous. Let us do away with religions or at least finish off with religious mischiefs ; and if we can't, for God's sake let us not blame the British for the deadlock, a lock so dead that it has no key. We are the authors of our own foolhardiness. The master key to Indian freedom is not with the British Parliament. It is right within us. If we combine, just you and I, plain Mr. Ram and equally plain Mr. Rahim, no earthly power can resist our political demand. Unity *may* follow freedom, but

freedom *must* follow unity.

The flames lit by Shahid Gunj burnt bold and bright in the political furnace of Waziristan. It was a new danger that the British Government had to face. Poor British Government! I really pity it for its child-like innocence in religious affairs. Why not demolish all religious institutions with a high, iron, dictatorial hand? Get rid of the religions and you will getr id of the riots. The *mullah* domination will disappear from the Frontier. The trouble in Waziristan, led by the Faqir of Ipi was particularly religionistic in colouring. It was just another Islam-in-danger signal. The Faqir of Ipi announced his readiness to make peace :

I. Provided the Government should pledge itself not to interfere in religious disputes through its law-courts.

II. Provided the Hindu girl kidnapped and converted to Islam was duly and dutifully returned to her Muslim husband.

III. Provided the Shahid Gunj Mosque was rebuilt and honourably returned to the Muslim community.

Since these conditions could not be accepted by the British authorities, because these terms broke the pledges given by Queen Victoria, the Indian Government had to launch a million soldiers to face the tribal hornets in the nest of Waziristan. Early in 1936 tribal fanaticism was excited on the Black Mountain by the news of the Shahid Gunj Mosque episode. Tribal *lashkars* collected. They attacked British posts and Indian bazars. They stated they wanted to demolish a Hindu Temple and quench their thirst for revenge.

CHAPTER VI

THE FRONTIER GANDHI

Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan resembles the Generalissmo Chiang Kai-shek of China rather than the Mahatma Gandhi of India. There is something strikingly common between the Chinese Generalissimo and the Frontier Gandhi. They both are cut out for military leadership. Both of them are leading an ascetic life by a supreme effort of will. Their standard of living is at the bottom of society. Neither of them is fond of pomp and show. The Frontier Khan has given up even drinking tea. Chiang Kai-shek, unlike his countrymen, takes it rarely. Mahatma Gandhi, on the other hand, could never have become a great military figure. His place was in the firmament of law and order. No wonder, he took to non-violence. Non-violence, the handmaid of law, came natural to him. Non-violence, on the other hand, is not convenient to a Pathan. A Pathan is warm and warry. His temperament has been violent since the days of the very first invaders who crossed the Frontier and disturbed the peace of his home and hearth. Hence, it must have been a mighty task for young Abdul Ghaffar to take to the cult of non-violence. His accomplishment is a supreme manifestation of will. History does not show his parallel. Even General Chiang does not come up to his level. Chiang is a Christian. Christianity has baptised his military spirit in a cool shower of water. Moreover, Chiang is a Chinese. And renunciation is a thread of Chinese philosophy. But not so with Abdul Ghaffar Khan. He is neither a

Chinese nor a Hindu. China and Hindustan have a community of spirit. China is the land of Buddhism. Buddhism is the child of Hinduism. But there is no golden thread between a Hindu and a Pathan. That Abdul Ghaffar should become a Gandhi is nothing short of a psychological revolution. He is the first Gandhi to be a Frontierman and the first Frontierman to be a Gandhi.

Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan was born right on the North-Western shoulder of India. His father, Behram Khan, was chief of an Utmanzai village in the Peshawar District. His grandfather had fought in the Rebellion of 1857 on the side of the British. Born in affluence, Young Ghaffar was reared up in luxury. He had everything that money can buy fot the son of a Khan. Khan means chief. Ghaffar was born to be the Khan of his clan. In a carefree atmosphere he grew strong and sturdy. Of course, the life in the Frontier Valley is never carefree. Family feuds are perpetually rife, and an infant has to be on his guard as soon as he bids farewell to the cradle. But such a life only makes a man militant and paves the way for a militant career. How Little Ghaffar passed his infancy it is not difficult to imagine. A toy gun is a favourite possession of every Frontier child, and Ghaffar must have had one. He must have been a good shot, practising the bull's-eye, and hunting little doves and sparrows. All Frontier boys are fond of bird-catching and egg-hunting. Little Ghaffar must have been a good climber like the riff-raff of his age. But then there came a time when the youngest must go to school. And boy Ghaffar was admitted into the best institution in the whole province —the Church of England Mission School. Here he had the best opportunity for foreign training available

to any Indian child throughout the length and breadth of our country. Boy Ghaffar felt a certain sense of pride in manipulating a few broken English words like all of us when we were children. Yet what glory? We can never reply this question unless we grow up and stand shoulder to shoulder with our fair friends, from beyond the seven seas, whose mother tongue we have tried to imbibe so affectionately in the days gone by, the golden days of school life where everything is angelic. Then the sand slips under our feet. Anyhow, English never had such a charming hold on the Frontier as in other parts of the country. No foreign language can have a foothold beyond the Indus. A Pathan valued his Pushto. He has been glorifying it since the dawn of a new day on the Frontier horizon. And boy Ghaffar, no doubt, was a chip of the old block.

It must have been a happy day in the family of Utmanzai Khan when Young Ghaffar went up for higher studies. Crossing over the Punjab University sraight-away, the Pathan landed at Aligarh, the Muslim National centre of education. It is a glorious fact in the history of the Aligarh University that its students have always stood out for stout Nationalism. Right up till now they have been resisting the reactionary charm of Muslim League. The magic spell of Mr. Jinnah has not produced any fascination in the have-not cultured section. Chopping off the landed gentry, the titled Nawabs, and the Mullah-ridden individuals, the heart of the Muslim community is entirely sound. No doubt, Young Ghaffar had a very desirable type of training. Aligarh was not then, as it is now, the battle-ground of national and reactionary forces. In those days it was a cradle of patriotism. Young Ghaffar was deeply influenced by the magnetic personality of Moulana

Abul Kalam Azad. His political writings told deeply on the mind of the young collegiate. Moulana is a gifted writer of the first rank in Urdu. And his paper, *Al Hilal* was quite a rage at this time. The editor held up a straightforward ideal before his community. He shaped the nationalist movements by the power of his pen. Maulana is an Encyclopædist. And may well be compared to the pre-Revolution philosophers of France. *Al Hilal* took its birth in 1912. It was an Urdu paper, with a new departure in journalism. Immediately it became a burning centre of controversy. It made a powerful attack on tradition. The elderly Muslim leaders of the reactionary school were cut to the quick. The paper's radicalism was shocking. Threats of murder were given to the young editor. " Few papers in the history of Indian Journalism", says Yusuf Meherally, the ex-Mayor of Bombay, " have exercised an influence compared to that of *Al Hilal*."* No wonder, young Ghaffar felt the warmth of Moulana's views, and drank deeply at the fountains of nationalism.

Young Ghaffar came out of the Aligarh University with a magnetic personality. His striking appearance had an element of charm. He towered over six feet and a quarter. I believe he was not so tall when he left Peshawar for higher studies. One never grows so fast as in the college atmosphere. Intellectual turrets and towers draw a drooping spirit up. But he had other reasons to be able-bodied as well as able-brained. And he weighed over fifteen stones. The flame of patriotism was aglow in his soul. He was going to do something for his beloved province. What? He did not know. Face an Empire? The mighty British

Leaders of India p. 2, Padma Publications Ltd., Bombay.

Empire? No, he had no such idea. At least, not in the immediate future. Nevertheless, he had need for all the strength he could muster. After all, he was the chief of his clan. And he must be stout enough to control the hot-headed Pathans. Besides, he belonged to a distinguished line of military yoemen. And the Government had all the need of his giantlty physique. A brilliant military awaited him. Awaited him somewhere in the British Empire? Perhaps in France? Perhaps in Italy? Against Hitler? Mussolini? Stalin? A lieutenantship, to start with. Young Ghaffar could have a King's Commission for the asking. There was a duel in his mind between the Giant Tradition and the Dwarf Radicalism. No wonder, the giant won the wrestle of conflicting emotions in the psychological arena of a youth on the threshold of life, going to venture forth into realms unheard and unseen. Destiny was leading young Ghaffar by the hand.

He thought of joining the army. There was every reason that he should. He had the build of a soldier, the grasp of a general. Moreover, he belonged to a brilliant lineage of Frontier Yeomen. Army was the "natural" profession for him. His family liked it. And there was every reason that he should. As he was making up his mind, he went to see a friend in the military headquarters at Peshawar. There he saw something which embittered his mind beyond description. A young junior British officer was insulting an old senior Indian officer. It was the same old white-black tangle. Iron ran into his soul. Here was the turning point in his career. He determined not to serve the demon of war. On the other hand, he became a soldier of peace. Ever since his life has been an essay in renunciation. On the altar of a national cause, he has been doomed

to be a confirmed jail-bird. Born and bred up in an overflow of luxury, he is now leading almost an ascetic life. Twice the Presidentship of the Indian National Congress was offered to him. Twice the Presidentship of the Congress was refused by him. He put forward as an argument that he was not worthy to occupy so exalted an office. Should Mr. Jinnah dare play Brutus, Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru and Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan remind us of Mark Anthony and Julius Cæsar. Twice the crown was offered to Julius Cæsar, said Anthony, and twice he refused it. The same may be said of the Frontier Gandhi. He prefers to be a humble soldier in the national movement rather than have the airs of a general. He is the uncrowned king of the Pathans.

The Frontier Gandhi carried the torch of patriotism into his province. With zest and zeal, he set about enlisting the sympathies of his people for a great and glorious cause. The agitation against the Rowlatt Act shook the Frontier under his direction and steerage. Success followed the banner of his enthusiasm. Thousands upon thousands of eager, curious, want-to-do-something Pathans attended his meetings. Ghaffar Khan was arrested before the eyes of his ninety-year old father who walked all the way to hear his son addressing the people. He was imprisoned without a trial. Then the Police Chief led a deputation to the caged bird. He persuaded young Khan to desist from anti-British activities. The kind concern of the police was understandable. The grandfather of Abdul Ghaffar had fought on the side of the British. But the young Khan lent no ear to the sweet voice of bureaucracy. Later on, the Government also arrested the aged father. The old man, in the shadow of a century, who imbibed the influence of his son. And travelled all the way from

dogged dutifulness to British Raj and reached the haven of obstinate opposition. This glorious example has a parallel in the chronicles of Indian National Congress. A similar influence was exerted by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru over his father, Motilal Nehru, who swung from the twigs of loyalty into the shadow of opposition.

The jail life has ceased to be a new experience for Ghaffar Khan. Off and on, he has been behind the bars, and has often seen the inside of horrible cells. Being rather tall, his fathers were rather small. Nevertheless, he kept cheery and spread sunshine round him to the rayless hearts of depressed prisoners. Outside the bars he is deeply interested in communal harmony and has been conducting classes for explaining the ideas of Islam and Hinduism. He knows more of the Koran and the Gita than the Mullahs and the Pandits. For him the God of the Mosque is also the God of the Mandir. Christ and Krishna are bosom friends. All religious differences are simply a tool in the hand of the political mongers. Ghaffar Khan took a vigorous part in the Non-co-operation and the Khilafat Movement. Also he developed a deep interest in National Education. The Pathan must be educated in order to be a stout nationalist. Along with the Haji of Turangzai, he built up a net-work of national school. The Haji Sahib has all along been a firm foe of British policy. With a band of devoted followers, off and on he gave sleepless nights to the army command. Civil Disobedience in 1930 opened a new chapter in the history of the Frontier Province. The patient work of Khan Brothers bore fruit. The whole province lined up with the nationalist leaders. The message of Mahatma Gandhi was drummed from the top of the houses. The Jails

were packed. Thousands of prisoners were pouring every day like a regular stream. This was more than the British authorities could bear. They saw the Frontier slipping out of their hands. But this is the most important province from military point of view. A national move on the border is too much for British nerves. A reign of terror soon followed. The tragic incident of Kisa Khani firing and Pathan martyrs is well known. Peshawar Inquiry Committee was instituted by the Congress. It was presided over by the late Mr. Vithalbhai Patel. He resigned his Chairmanship of the Indian Legislative Assembly before proceeding to Peshawar. The Report was, as might have been expected well in advance, proscribed by the Government. The authorities also banned several books that attempted to give an idea of the Report.

Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan was set at liberty when an agreement was reached between Mahatma Gandhi and Lord Irwin. A few months later he was imprisoned again. The Frontier Ordinance was enforced even before the Round Table Conference was over, and Mahatma Gandhi had landed on Indian shores. No charges were proved. It was suggested that the Frontier Gandhi was planning an armed rebellion. The tribes were to be set afoot against the Government. The Haji of Turangzai .was supposed to be in league with Ghaffar Khan. But as far as I know the Pathans did not resort to the arms. They were resisting the Government non-violently. It was a spectacle that inspired the whole country. Brothers, sisters, sons and nephews followed Ghaffar Khan to Jail. Practically his whole family was arrested. This is exactly what has always occurred in the case of Mahatma Gandhi. His wife and sons usually went up to the cell immediately after his arrest.

Ghaffar Khan is in complete accord with the principle of non-violence. But he has not barrowed his outlook from Mahatma Gandhi. He has reached it. And reached it independenly. Independently like a struggler after truth. No doubt, his deep study of Koran has influenced his doctrine of love. Yes, the Koran. The very Koran which taught Mahmud Ghaznavi the cult of sword has taught Ghaffar Khan the cult of love. The truth is that the kings as well as the clowns read a religious book upside down. They read their motives in the Bible. Prophet Mohammad never taught violence. Self-seeking monarchs have forced their will on the wisdom of the Koran. There can be no greater injury to the Prophet. No prophet has ever taught violence. It is impossible. Nobody can be violent. "In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful". It sounds odd to say the least. The Koran is no more violent than the Gita is. Both permit the use of violence in the performance of a duty, only in the extreme cases, when all other avenues have failed, but even then the force must not be used even an inch beyond absolute requirement ; and above all, the use of force should have absolutely no self-interest. Not only that, the user of force, against himself or anybody else, whether it is a case of suicide or homicide, will be a polluted person, dead or alive, and neither earth nor heaven shall receive him, until he has bathed himself clean by repentance, austerity, sacrifice or charity, which has been duly accepted by the Divine Powers whosoever they be. Being an occultist a member of the hidden circle, in touch with the forces that govern the matter, I have put the matter mathematically before you. Any serious student of the Koran will find that my interpretation is correct. Hence, if Ghaffar Khan has arrivedat

the philosophy of non-violence, it is absolutely no wonder. Of the two, Ghaffar Khan and Mahatma Gandhi, my personal view is that the former has achieved a higher level of spirituality. The Khan has reached heaven, while the Pandit is firmly on the earth but, ironically enough, the Mahatma is struggling in the air! Ghaffar Khan, like Shelley, has come from heaven to the earth, while Mahatma Gandhi, like Keats, is going from earth to the heaven. Hence, I do not understand why Ghaffar Khan should be called the Frontier Gandhi. There is no other reason except this that the Mahatma was earlier in the field, more ambitious than spiritual, and has been able to capture, somehow or the other, a greater publicity. If we judge a person by spiritual qualities, Mahatma Gandhi should rather be called the Indian Khan than Ghaffar Khan the Frontier Gandhi : true, there the matter ends. But now we come to another point by sheer association of ideas. Why Kalidas is called the Shakespeare of India? As far as I understand, our countryman was senior to his British rival by a large number of centuries. The code of courtesy demands that Shakespeare should be called the Kalidas of England.

Ghaffar Khan is warmly attached to the interest of the masses. He sincerely desires freedom for his country. He is a radical. Islam has not made him a die-hard. Jinnah no doubt, "dies" hard for his religion. Ghaffar Khan derives his great faith in religion from his father. Ghaffar Khan believes that all religions are of equal inner value. He has pinned his faith in the quintessence of religion. His broad-mindedness has won him general respect. He is to-day one of the most important figures in the politics of the country. Since pretty long he has

been a regular member of the Congress Working Committee. He has built up a powerful national movement. He has drawn the Frontier within the Congress orbit. He has successfully weaved the warlike Pathan from the path of violence. He has given his people a new consciousness of life. A life of labour and love. He has brought huge Muslim mass support to back up the national demand. He has created a powerful body of volunteers. Ghaffar Khan called them the Khudai Khidmatgars. It means the "Servants of God." It filled the Frontier officials with nervousness. The severest repression was not able to break it up. The Government called them Red Shirts and did smart propaganda work. But only the shirts are red. The ideas of the Khudai Khidmatgars are not coloured. They are servants of God in thought, word and deed. Even their shirts are not red, but only dyed in brick dust. The Red Shirts—of the official terminology—are too patriotic to waste their money on foreign dyes.

Ghaffar Khan is a man of cool courage and firm fortune. In prison he learnt of the hunger strike of his nephew. His nephew was also in prison. Prisons and patriots abide together. Ghaffar Khan did not attempt to meet his nephew. He did not dissuade him from his sacred crusade. It would have been unholy. The young man actually fasted for seventy-eight days. Thus he beat Terrance MacSwiney, the Irish hunger-striker who could not pass the ordeal successfully by a number of days. When the life of his nephew became uncertain, Ghaffar Khan wrote a letter to the Government about the disposal of his body. Ironically enough, that was the only request he could make to John Bull. He is a man of conviction rather than of words. Far from being an orator, he

rarely speaks. But the few words springing from the depth of his soul rarely fail to hit the nail on the head. He has a stiking appearance, a magnetic personality, an element of charm. Repeated imprisonment has worn his body but not his spirit. At one time he weighed over fifteen stones. At present his weight is just a little over eleven stones. The marks of suffering are writ large on his person.

The Pathan now very well understands the magic of democracy. What he does not grasp is the British faith in it. They follow the leadership of Ghaffar Khan, because he alone can teach them the true ideals of democracy as the West understands them. The British attitude of bombs and bullets followed by big sweetened words does not appeal to the tribal hearts. That is why the border and cis-border Pathans are ever ready to rise and drive the *Kafir Firinghee* beyond the Indus. The dynamic qualities of Abdul Ghaffar Khan can alone keep them within the tether of law and the doctrine of love. It is a pity that the landed gentry cannot see the light of reason, and do not understand that Ghaffar Khan is really carrying on the British fight; and like Mahatma Gandhi, he is the greatest friend of Britain, an efficient policeman across the Indus. He and his brother, Dr. Khan Sahib, were educated at the Church of England Mission school in Peshawar, and there they came under the influence of a splendid type of Englishman, Dr. Wigram. Here they imbibed the true spirit of democracy. Khan Sahib went later on to Edinburgh University where he took a medical degree. What the Khan brothers are doing, actually England and Englishmen have taught them. The truth is that there is a world of difference between the soul and body of the true Englishman: the Britisher at home and the British

in India. Power corrupts the man, at least the bureaucratic officialdom. Sir Stafford Cripps came to India with noble thoughts, but men at the spot worked their magic on him, and he went back a changed man to rest his limbs on English daffodils and muse again. This time he will never get the old sweet tune from England or from India. He lost a good opportunity of serving a good cause, because he could not say his mind to the glittering bureaucracy who pulled the strings of even such an independent man as Sir Stafford Cripps.

The sister of Ghaffar Khan was married to the Haji of Turangzai who for years has been the terror of British bureaucracy across the Indus. Ghaffar Khan has exercised a great useful influence over his brother-in-law and brought him within the pale of Congress policy. It is notable that Haji was very cautious and did not join his forces with men who wanted to upset things Tirah without sufficient political reason. Towards the end of his life he realized the danger of attacking the British armies face to face and desisted from collecting a *lashkar* for that purpose. He was certain that defeat in a pitched fight is as sure as death and he was mightily afraid of the British roads and the British policy of peaceful penetration, because it compromised the wild freedom of the hills and brought the hill tribes into the clutches of the British,—the British clutches of law.

Ghaffar Khan realized that the Congress support was essential for any peaceful propaganda work against the British. It is said that he won the friendship of Mahatma Gandhi through Dr. Ansari, that well-known Muslim supporter of the Congress policy and programme. With the moral support of Congress, Ghaffar Khan was able to spread the national movement of

Khudai Khidmatgars throughout the province. Thus he earned for himself the title of the Frontier Gandhi. Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru was astonished to see that this great giant of six feet four inches was willing to accept the principle of non-violence. He described him as " Straight in body and mind, looking forward to the freedom of his province within the framework of Indian freedom." It involves a supreme effort of will for a Pathan to accept the doctrine of non-violence. " Whatever the truth may be," says Sir William Barton, "Abdul Ghaffar has succeeded in acquiring an outstanding influence throughout the province, a unique achievement since the beginning of British rule. It is due almost entirely to him that thousands of young Pathans, educated or illiterate, have been drawn into the vortex of the Indian political movement and have enrolled themselves under the Red Shirt banner." He has brought the wild folk within the framework of law and order The huge concourse of Gandhi-capped Pathans entertained Mahatma Gandhi on the beautiful lawns of a great house, where the British big bureaucracy invited the beauty and fashion of Peshawar. It was an imposing spectacle when hundreds of young Pathan students read an address of welcome to Mahatma Ji. The Congress has no doubt won the loyalty and confidence of the Frontier. Ghaffar Khan has been an excellent spearhead of national movement. Conservative elements have been badly damaged if daring the sweeping tide of nationalism. Real Congress sympathy has gone a long way in restoring mutual understanding between the British officials and the wild tribes of the Frontier hills.

Ghaffar Khan has lit the Frontier ablaze with the national spirit. In the metaphor of Simon Commission,

the Congress in the Frontier has been playing with fire in a powder magazine. They are prepared to risk anything for the salvation of their motherland. Ghaffar Khan is not an outlaw priest. Nor are the Khudai Khidmatgars a bitterly fanatical body. Here the British officials have to face a duly-constituted organization as the British law understands it. Dr. Khan Sahib, the brother of Ghaffar Khan, is a retired officer of the Indian Medical Service and is married to an English woman. Surely, he could not nurse anti-British feelings with an English wife and an Anglo-Indian daughter by his side. The Khan brothers have nothing to do with anti-British move. They are law-abiding followers of the principle of non-violence as Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress understands it. The Servants of God cannot be the servants of the devil. They have never tried to embroil the tribes with the Government and undermine the British position. Most of the firing has almost always been on the official side, since the Congress gripped its hold tight on the masses in Frontier. In 1931 Ghaffar Khan addressed *jirgahs* of the lower Mohmands. Halimzai and Tarakzai tribes attended the meeting in large numbers. A party of the Khudai Khidmatgars was founded in the tribes. For the first time in history the tribes had an organized political body to direct their emotions into proper channels. The Red Shirts do not run counter to, but practically help, the British policy of peaceful penetration. They help to civilize the tribes, and the officials need not be unduly nervous if the Congress slogans are heard in the Afghan hills. The gospel of non-violence may one day exercise the magic appeal among the border folk. Abdul Ghaffar Khan told an English journalist recently that if the British Government would supply him with the

nccessary funds, he would tame the border in five years by opening dispensaries and founding schools.

Abdul Ghaffar wears the emblem of the hammer and sickle. But as already told, the brick-red colour is only a symbol. In the Frontier the red is colour for blood, no doubt, but it signifies the martyrs rather than the tyrants. The tyrants may have red hands—with other people's blood—but their shirts are not always red, as the martyrs always have. In their peaceful penetration —to use British phrase—the Khan brothers need neither a sickle nor a hammer, neither a bomb nor a bullet. They have to conquer the hearts and not the hamlets of the Afghan people. Dr. Khan Sahib, Premier since 1938 of the Frontier Ministry, told the Central Assembly in March 1939 that the border tribes were uniting to establish a republic. He strongly criticized the Government for allowing the present state of terrorism on the Bannu border. He toured the villages in the neighbourhood and reassured the people. His proposal is to arm every adult villager. It would provide a strong irregular army. The Khan brothers are related by kinship to Badshah Gul, the son of the late Haji of Tarangzai, who is recognised as spiritual head of the upper Mohmand and Majam tribes. Thus the family of Ghaffar Khan has a pretty tight hold on the hills. He has converted them to the creed of non-violence.

Early in 1932 the Red Shirt Movement was at its height. Mr. Edward Thompson in his book *A Letter from India* mentions : "the Red Shirts, organized by Abdul Ghaffar Khan (whom it is usual to refer to affectionately as A. G. K)". The Red Shirts are closely united to the Congress and work hand in hand. They wage Mahatma Gandhi's campaign of non-violence.

"At the end of 1931", says Harry J. Greenwall, "the situation was terribly dangerous. At any moment we were liable to be driven out of the North-West. Abdul Ghaffar Khan, of affectionate memory, looked like succeeding." Mr. Greenwall is being ironical against Mr. Thompson, the modern magical writer. Mr. Greenwall is angry and cannot understand why Mr. Thompson refers to Ghaffar Khan so affectionately, and wonders "what Mr. Thompson's pet name is for a sore throat." To say the least, Mr. Greenwall has insulted not only his great countryman, but greater still the Frontier Gandhi, and the greatest of all, of course, the Indian nationhood. Such men of Miss Mayo type deserve a safe niche in the gutter of literature. Only those who have really come in touch with the Frontier Gandhi know what an affectionate personality he is. To the masses in the Frontier he is veritably a god. To the Indians at large he is a second Gandhi. And Gandhi, as we know, is second to no personality that England has ever produced down the tide of history. No Englishman ever had such a hold on his people as Ghaffar Khan has on the hearts of his countrymen. It is only to be requested that journalists like Mr. Greenwall should rather hold their tongue than pass a verdict on a great personality in the East by a single sweep of the pen. I wonder, if Mr. Greenwall is not a green horn in Indian society. Like a raw youth he ran loose through the country, passing judgment on men and matters which he did not care very much to probe. Just like the "Drain Inspectress"—Mahatma Gandhi's name for Miss Mayo—he ran from gutter to gutter and mistook them for India. "For God's sake," said friends to Mr. Greenwall, "don't write a book about India!" He heard that expression 'not only

going to India, but also coming back, and likewise in many places in that vast country. Sometimes it was said with a smile, sometimes with a frown, often with sarcasm'.

It would have been better if Mr. Greenwall had listened to friendly voices and not scribbled his book *Storm Over India* (Hurst and Blackett, London). "But every time I heard it," he says, "I obtained just a little more urge to want to write a book about India." So it was a case for a pathologist. He was "ready to be courageous enough to talk and write about India," even if he was to be "charged with being 'superficial'." This, no doubt, he proved. "I think", he says "that many people will agree with me when I say that the Simon Report is the best text-book on India that has ever been written." Well done, Mr. Greenwall.

CHAPTER VII

SERVANTS OF GOD

The *Khudai Khidmatgars* are the spearhead of political mavement across the Indus. The terms literally mean "The Servants of God". Hence the *Khudai Khidmatgars* are truly Islamic in thought, word and deed. The word "Islam" really means "renunciation to the will of God". The *Khudai Khidmatgars* live simple and think high. They do nôt suffer from the black death of fanaticism, quite unlike the Muslim League which is trademarkedly Islamic. The Muslim League is a league of fanaticists rather than Muslims, because the true .followers of Islam cannot be fanatic. The Servants of God, officially known as the Red Shirts, are the backbone of the Congress in the North-Western Frontier. This magnificent organization is the creation of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, affectionately called the Frontier Gandhi. The influence exercised by Ghaffar Khan on the Muslim minds is no whit less than the hold of Mahatama Gandhi on the Hindu masses. But for the will and work of Ghaffar Khan, the surging tides of Islam would have knocked at the door of nationalism, but probably would not have entered the fold of the Indian National Congress. No other movement ever had had such magnetic reactions among the border tribes as the Red Shirts. Red Shirts are not red in philosophy. And this official designation is entirely unsuited. As far as possible this nickname should be avoided. If a briefer title is required, the *Khudai Khidmatgars* may be called K. K. The K. K.

Movement, unlike the K. K. K., is full of sacrifice rather than secrecy. The Khudai Khidmatgars have uprooted communism from the province. Chamarkand in Bajaur has been a storm centre of communism. The Chamarkand community are mostly from Bihar. In Bihar there is a Muslim group of puritanical leanings known as the Ahli Hadis. They are merchants and carry on the hide trade in Bihar. They send young men and money to Chamarkand. The Chamarkand people have been under the Babra Mullah for the last fifteen years. They have been actively spreading communism among the tribes of Dir. But since they have come under the influence of *Khudai Kidmatgars*, national schools have been started in Dir under Congress auspices.

During the Afghan War in May 1919 Abdul Ghaffar Khan did not attempt to raise the tribes against the British.Nevertheless he was arrested in 1920. He was supposed to be carrying on political agitation across the border. He was, however, soon set at liberty. As soon as he was free, he led the *Khudai Khidmatgars* magnificently in the Khilafat agitation. It was now that the Servants of God for the first time joined hands with the Indian National Congress in a common cause. The result was that the K. K. Movement soon lit up the whole frontier from the Indus to the Durand Line. Under the blightening influence of K. K., the British bureaucracy for a time lost its grip and grasp on the tribes. "Political considerations," says Sir William Barton, "Undoubtedly led the Simla authorities to allow a free hand to Abdul Ghaffar, the Red Shirt leader, a policy which all but set the whole border in a blaze. It cannot be claimed that any real effort has been made to bring about a permanent solution of the Frontier problem. What was the cause of the blight that settled on the

policy of peaceful penetration which seemed at one time to promise some hope of success. The best answer to the question would be to saunt down the Mall at Simla in August, and to watch the motley crowd of politicians, mostly clad in the party home-spun proceeding to the Chamber of the Legislative Assembly. Listen to the debates, to the fierce invective directed at the Government benches, to the impeachment of Frontier policy as another base move of British imperialism to justify its retention of British troops in India, to the denunciation of British military methods as infinitely worse than anything that can be laid to the charge of Franco or the Japanese ; listen to diatribes against defence policy for an hour or so and you will realize why the great bureaucracy, once so powerful, so sure of itself, no longer feels itself able, as in the eighties, confidently to press forward a strong policy of pacification on the Frontier. Will Whitehall supply the stimulus required ? Kabul moves from strength to strength ; the busy kind of officialdom in Simla no longer holds India in the hollow of its hand."

The Morley-Minto reforms gave another vital stimulus to the *Khudai Khidmatgars.* So hopelessly narrow reforms irritated the politically minded in the province. Ghaffar Khan criticised them vigorously. A stout propaganda was carried on among the Mohmands and the Wazirs of Bannu. Congress missionaries went right into the Black Mountain. Members of K. K. were enrolled in Dir, Bajaur, and in the protected areas of the Malakand. The Nawab of Dir attempted loyally to keep his tribes in check ; but the virus of anti-British preaching was too strong for him. The tribesmen broke and burnt three British levy posts on the Chitral road. Bajaur and Mohmand country allied themselves with

the Red Shirts. The Faqir of Alingar, the enemy of the Haji of Turangzai, the brother-in-law of Ghaffar Khan, also joined hands. To him it was a heaven-send opportunity to shake the foundation of the British Raj. The Faqir of Alingar promptly had a *lashkar* on foot in Bajaur. But the British hawks swooped down and dispersed the crowds. The Afridis could not measure the events dispassionately. In the Peshawar district the Red Shirts established what was almost a parallel government. In April 1930 there was a serious rioting in the city. The indecision of authorities led to a serious outbreak. Thousands upon thousands of Pathans joined the *Khudai Khidmatgars*. Then there came the news of Gandhi-Irwin Pact, but this agreement was honoured in the breach rather than the observance. The Government blamed the Congress and the Congress blamed the Government. On the evening of Boxing Night 1931 large bodies of troops worked with the police. By a series of secret movements all Red Shirt centres were surrounded. Nearly one thousand Red Shirt leaders were arrested. It was followed by a considerable trouble. In Kohat large bodies of troops came into collision with the tribesmen. It is worth noting that Congress propaganda extended as far as the Afghan province of Khost.

In 1932 Sir Abdul Qaiyyum became the first Minister of the Frontier Province. Without the British prop he was an incapable man and did not enjoy popular support. The temper of the tribes was kept uncertain by the political zeal of the Red Shirts. The revolutionary slogans of the Congress were heard in the Afghan hills. The arrest of Red Shirt leaders brought the trouble to a head. The fort of the Haji of Turangzai was bombed. The Government could not imagine

that the congress could seize any power in the Frontier, a province so predominantly Muslim, still under the shadow of peaceful penetration. But they were soon disillusioned when the Red Shirts appeared on the scene. They built up their organization in the huts and hamlets of the villages and grew strong enough to face the British lion. Only the Congress and the Servants of God could protect Islam against the imperial ambitions of Britain. Sir Abdul Qaiyyum, as a supposed Government man, weakened the opposition to Congress. Hence the Congress emerged from .the elections as the strongest party with nineteen members out of fifty. At the outside Congress decided not to take office under the new constitution. As a consequence Sir Abdul Qaiyyum succeeded in making a shortlived makeshift government. The Hindu-Sikh national party of seven members offered him their reluctant support. He was immediately swept from power by Dr. Khan Sahib and the Servants of God when Congress decided to form ministry in August 1938. The Hindu-Sikh party decided to throw in their lot with the Congress. Hold as it did, the balance of power. *Bande Mataram*, the Congress national anthem, was sung. The Congress flag waved over the Assembly Chambers.

The Congress introduced a bill into the Frontier Legislative Assembly with the object of repealing all repressive laws. The Ministry allowed the Bill to go through successfully ; but the Governor with his special powers refused to give his assent to the Bill. All honorary magistrates have been abolished under the Congress regime, because these aristocratic Khans often abused their power. The ministry held itself responsible for maintaining border peace. It strongly criticized the Government of India for allowing the present state

of terrorism on the Bannu border. The main difficulty is finance. The province does not pay its way. It has to depend upon the generosity of the Central government. Administration is far more expensive than in India generally. The police eats up a large sum of money. The Finance Minister proposed to cut down the police budget. But the Congress could not have its own way. Also the Governor did not allow the Teri Dues Repeal Bill. The Governor's action was heavily attacked by Congress supporters both within and outside the Assembly. During the Congress Ministry, Mahatama Gandhi and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru visited the Frontier. Twenty thousand Pathans rent the welkin with the shout "*Malang baba zinda bad.*" The Pathans want national freedom irrespective of the forms of government.

The Frontier Ministry has never been a very glorious thing, so far as the Servants of God are concerned. Their romance consists in an intensive programme of nationalisation. The ministry was at best an anti-climax, and nobody was very worried about it. When the war broke out and India was dragged into it without rhyme or reason, all Congress Ministers walked out of the Assembly Chambers. And the Frontier Ministry, as might well have been expected, lined up with them. No Congressmen seemed to care a fig for Ministership. The climax of the *Khudai Khidmatgars* was reached in 1930-33. In the first three years of the thirties, they did a marvellous work. The Ked Shirt Movement, under Abdul Ghaffar Khan, was at the height of its success. At the end of 1931 the situation was thick with national atmosphere. The local government at Peshawar was grinding its teeth. But Delhi wanted to go slow. Gandhi Ji was in prison. The ordinances were in operation everywhere, and with the

exception of the North-West Frontier, Bombay and Calcutta, matters were fairly peaceful. On the Christmas Night, Ghaffar Khan and his followers were arrested. All the members of the Red Shirt Movement who had been arrested were put in a Jail at Haripur. Then there took place a mutiny at about the same time as the Dartmon prison mutiny in England. Although the mutiny was quelled, it was impossible for any white women to go into the bazar at Peshawar. The European Cantonment was encircled with barbed wire, Peshawar looked liked a city in a state of siege. On March 7th, the following official *communique* was issued :—

"For the last three or four weeks various well-known fire-brands, notably the Haji of Turangzai, who is a relation by marriage of Abdul Ghaffar Khan, his son, Badshah Gul, the Faqir of Alinagar, and a son of the late Balna Mullah, had been unremitting in their efforts to raise against the Government those trans-Frontier tribes which live north of the Kabul River and with this object had been preaching *Jehad* (holy war) amongst the Mohmands, the Utman Khel, and various tribes of Bajaur.

"This campaign affords an outstanding example of the value to be attached to the Congress and Red Shirt professions of non-violence, for there is an ample evidence to prove that this is all part and parcel of the Congress movement in the North-West Frontier Province. The leaders who are now inciting the tribes to open rebellion against the Government have all along been in the closest touch with certain Congress leaders in the Peshawar district, and are still being given active assistance by various Red Shirt absconders who evaded arrest by escaping across the border.

"For instance, Samander, an absconding Red Shirt

'salar' to Tarnab Charsadda, has been living with the Haji for some time, and has been responsible for a number of cyclostyled leaflets issued with the signature of BadshahGul, calling on the tribes to rise and fight with the Government. Congress agents have always been working in close touch with the Hindustani fanatic colony in Chamarkhan, whose activities have always been directed againsr the Government, and whose avowed object is the release of Mr. Gandhi and other Congress leaders".

How far these official instructions are true, it is difficult to say. If the Government blames the Congress, the Congress blames the Government. "The period extending from January 1930 to September 1934", says J. B. Kripalani, "when the second Civil Disobedience Movement was suspended, was out of great storm and stress. There was a brief interlude of comparative peace in 1931 governed by the Gandhi-Irwin Pact. But the pact had never a fair chance. There were throughout the period, complaints by Congressmen and Congress organisation of non-fulfilment of the terms of the pact by the officials." Another important incident of this period is the Kisakhani Firing which took place at Peshawar on April 23, 1930. Many innocent men, women and children lost their lives. Crowds of Red Shirts had assembled at the Kabuli Gate in the morning when two Congress leaders were arrested by the police. The official view is that the Assistant Superintendent of Police was hurt by a stone from the crowd, and that the people were armed with lathis, sticks, etc. The Congress view is that "the people were absolutely non-violent and were dispersing when the leaders were admitted into the Thana". The authorities maintain that the Deputy Commissioner took the armoured cars to the Kabuli Gate as a

precautionary measure. The nationalists hold that it intended to create impression and to strike horror. The police states that a despatch rider was hit by the crowd. The crowd is of the opinion that the rider collided with the armoured cars, which were rushed into people without warning and about 12 to 14 persons were crushed under their wheels, out of which 6 or 7 died instantaneousry and the remaining were seriously injured. Thereupon, according to official view, the crowd set fire to the armoured car, and the authorities were forced to resort to firing with a view to disperse the mob. The Congress says, "No. The object of firing was not so much to disperse the crowd as to use as much force as the authorities considered necessary to strike horror. Firing was therefore resorted to recklessly, indiscriminately, and for inordinate length of time. And it was not confined merely to the Bazar, but was extended to side streets, bylanes, balconies and other places roundabout." According to evidence 125 persons were killed, but the Congressmen say, "We have no doubt that a much large number must have been killed and a still larger number wounded."

On May 12, 1930, the Congress Working Committee at Allahabad appointed the Peshawar Enquiry Committee consisting of Mr. V. J. Patel as Chairman and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Maulana Abdul Kadir Kasuri, Sardar Sardul Singh Caveeshar, Lala Duni Chand of Lahore and Dr. Syed Mahmud with power to co-opt to enquire into and to report on the happenings at Peshawar on April 23, the events preceding and following those happenings and such other matters connected therewith as may arise in the course of the enquiry. The Committee having read and considered the reply of the Chief Commissioner, North-West

Frontier Province to the communication addressed by Acting President prohibiting the entry of the Chairman and members of the Peshawar Enquiry Committee into the Frontier Province, requested the Chairman to select such other place outside the Frontier Province as he may consider proper for the purpose of enquiry. The Committee also considered the question of the relative importance of the presence of the Chairman and the members of the Committee in other parts of the country and of the Chairman in particular in Gujarat and Bombay, but was of opinion that it was absolutely necessary that the enquiry should commence without any avoidable delay and requested the Chairman and members to fix the date and venue of enquiry forthwith. The Committee was not aware of the reasons why the Congress Committees in the N.-W. F. Province had been declared illegal, but it was definitely of opinion that having regard to the principle of non-violence on which the whole Congress organization was based no Congress Committee as such should have been declared unlawful. The Committee therefore hoped that the Congress Committees in the N.-W. F. Province would continue to function notwithstanding the Government declaration.

On July 30, 1930, at Bombay the Acting President of the Congress Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, explained the circumstances under which the non-official Peshawar Inquiry Report was not available for discussion by the Working Committee and he hoped that the Committee would deal with the recommendations made in the report as soon as it was printed and made available. The Committee confirmed the advance of Rs. 1,500 made by the Acting President to Mr. R. S. Pandit, the Secretary of the Inquiry Committee, for printing the report.

The Working Committee resolved that the papers relating to the contract entered into by the Secretary of the Inquiry Committee with the Managing Editor, Indian Daily Mail, shall be referred to a lawyer for such action as he may advise.

On August 27, 1930, at Delhi, the Working Committee conveyed its thanks to the Chairman and members of the Peshawar Enquiry Committee appointed by the Acting President of the Congress and subsequently confirmed by the Committee at its meeting held at Allahabad on the 14th May 1230, for the industry and care with which they had collected the evidence and produced their report on the deplorable occurrences in Peshawar and neighbouring districts in April and May last, in spite of the order of the local Government prohibiting the Committee from entering the Frontier Province for the purpose of the enquiry and the hindrance placed thereby in their way. The Committee also considered the resolution of the Government of India on the report of the Suleiman Committee. The Committee could not accept its finding as correct, as they were based on practically one-sided evidence. The Committee expressed its concurrence with the following conclusions and findings of the Patel Committee which considered the evidence given before it as well as the evidence given before the Suleiman Committee as published in the public press :—

* * * * *

The Committee condemned the order of the U. P. Government proscribing Patel Enquiry Report inasmuch as it prevented the public from knowing the truth about the tragic occurrences in Peshawar and was calculated indirectly to shield the officers who were guilty of the shocking excesses and atrocities noted by the

Patel Committee. The Committee tendered its deep sympathies to the relations of those who lost their lives or limbs or suffered other injuries at the hands of the police or the soldiers and offered its sincere congratulations to the people of Peshawar and other Frontier districts who had borne in a spirit of patriotism and non-violence all the repression to which they had been subjected. And the Committee particularly offered its thanks and congratulations to Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan who had been the guiding spirit of the movement of non-violence in the Frontier Province.

All-India Congress Committee in its Karachi Session on March 27 and 28, 1931, declared that the people of India have no quarrel with the countries and peoples bordering on India and desires to establish and maintain friendly relations with them. The Congress disapproved of the so-called "forward" policy of the British Government in india in the North-West Frontier and of all imperialist attempts to destroy the freedom of the people of the frontier. The Congress was strongly of the opinion that the military and finance resources of India should not be employed in the furtherance of that policy, and the military occupation of the tribesmen's territory should be terminated. Inasmuch as propaganda was said to be going on in the Frontier Province that the Congress did not mean well by them and it was advisable that the Congress should take step to dispel that suspicion, the Congress thereby placed on record its opinion that in any constitutional scheme the N.-W. F. Province would have the same form of government as other provinces of India.

The Congress Working Committtee in its meeting dated 4-14-1931 held in Bombay, having conferred with the representatives of the N.-W. F. Province resolved

on the reconstitution of the Frontier P. C. C. and the incorporation of the Afghan Jirga in it. It was further resolved that *Khudai Khidmatgars* should become a part of the Congress Volunteer Organisation. The following statement, embodying the decisions of the Working Committee, was issued on behalf of the Committee : "Some misunderstanding having arisen in regard to Congress work in the North-West Frontier Province and the relations between the Provincial Congress organisation and the Afghan Jirga and the *Khudai Khidmatgars*, the Working Committee met Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Khan Aligul Khan, Hakim Abdul Jalil, Mr. Pir Bakhsh, Khan Amir Mohammad Khan and Shrimati Nikko Devi had discussed future work in the N.-W. F. Province. As a result of these discussions misunderstandings were removed and the Frontier leaders agreed to work together in accordance with certain decisions arrived at. It was pointed out that the Afghan Jirga was working the Congress programe and the *Khudai Khidmatgars* were acting as volunteers for giving effect to the programme. But as the Afghan Jirga had a separate constitution of its own it was no part of the Congress organisation. Confusion had also arisen owing to the use of a variety of flags by the Jirga. It was agreed by the Frontier leaders that the present P. C. C. and the Afghan Jirga should coalesce, and the new provincial organization formed in accordance with the Congress constitution should represent the Congress in the Province. The newly elected committee will be the Frontier P. C. C. In the language of the Province it will be described as the Frontier Province Jirga. Similarly the district and the local Congress Committees may de described as local Jirgas, the fact that they are Congress Committees being

also clearly stated. The *Khudai Khidmatgars*, it was agreed, should become Congress Volunteer organisations in accordance with the Working Committee's recent resolution. The name Khudai Khidmatgars, may, however, be retained. The whole organization should be conducted in accordance with the constitution, rules and programme of the Congress. The flag to be used henceforth will of course be the "National Flag". At the request of the Working Committee, the Frontier Leader, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, had undertaken to shoulder the burden of leading the Congress movement in the Province.

The Congress Working Committee in its meeting held on January 2, 1932, at Bombay heard Mahatama Gandhi's account of his visit to the west and considered the situation created by the extraordinary Ordinances promulgated in Bengal, the United Provinces, and by the actions of the authorities including the numerous arrests made among those of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Mr. Sherwani and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and by the shooting in the Frontier Province of innocent men resulting in many deaths and many more being injured. The Working Committee also saw the telegram from H. E. the Viceroy in reply to the telegram sent by Mahatma Gandhi to him. The Committee was of the opinion that if Bengal Ordinances had no justification for its existence, the Ordinance in the U.P. and the Frontier Provinces had still less. So far as the Frontier Province was concerned, on the Government's own showing there appeared to be no warrant for either the promulgation of the Ordinance or the arrest and imprisonment without trial of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his co-workers. The Working Committee noted that the British Government was not prepared at the Round

Table Conference to regard the Congress as representing and entitled to speak and act on behalf of the nation as a whole without distinction of caste, creed or colour. At the same time the Committee recognised with sorrow that communal harmony could not be attained at the said Conference.

Further, the Working Committee passed a resolution which applied to the Frontier as well as to other provinces: "It should be borne in mind that non-violent campaigns are independent of pecuniary assistance. Therefore, there should be no hired volunteers, but their bare maintenance and maintenance of the dependent of poor men and women who might have been imprisoned or killed is permissible whenever it is possible. The Working Committee, however, expects workers in the cause to continue the struggle even though they might have to suffer privations.

The following telegram was sent by Mahatma Gandhi to the Viceroy on December 29, 1931: I was unprepared on landing yesterday to find Frontier and U. P. Ordinances, shooting in Frontier and arrests of valued comrades in both, on the top of the Bengal Ordinances awaiting me.

"I do not know whether I am to regard these as an indication that friendly relations between us are closed or whether you expect me still to see you and receive guidance from you as to the course I am to pursue in advising the Congress. I would esteem a wire in reply."

The following reply was received from the Private Secretary to the Viceroy to the above telegram on December 31, 1931 :—

"His Excellency desires me to thank you for your telegram of the 29th instant in which you refer to Bengal and United Provinces and the N.-W. F. Province

Ordinances. In regard to Bengal it has been and is necessary for Government to take all posssible measures to prevent dastardly assassination of their officials and of private citizens.

"His Excellency wishes me to say that he and his Government desire to have friendly relations with all political parties and with all sections of the people and in particular to securing co-operation of all in great work of constitutional reforms which they are determined to put forward with minimum delay. Co-operation, however, must be mutual and His Excellency and his Government cannot reconcile activities of the Congress in the United Provinces and the N.-W. F. P. with the spirit of friendly co-operation which the good of Indian demands.

"As regard United Provinces you are doubtless aware that while the local Government were engaged in devising means to give all possible relief in the existing situation, the Provincial Congress Committee authorised a no-rent campaign which is now being vigorously pursued by Congress organisations in that Province. This action on the part of the Congress bodies has compelled Government to take measures to prevent a general state of disorder and spreading of class and commercial hatred which the campaign, if continued unchecked, would inevitably involve.

"In N.-W. F. Province Abdul Ghaffar Khan and the bodies he controlled have continuously engaged in services against Government and fomenting racial hatred. He and his friends have persistently refused all overtures by the Chief Commissioner to secure their co-operation and rejecting the declaration of the Prime Minister have declared in favour of complete independence.

"Abdul Ghaffar Khan has delivered numerous

speeches open to no other construction than an incitement to revolution and his adherents have attempted to stir up trouble in tribal areas. The Chief Commissioner, with the approval of His Excellency's Government has shown utmost forbearance and to the last moment continued his efforts to secure assistance of Abdul Ghaffar Khan in carrying into effect, with the least possible delay, the intention of His Majesty's Government regarding constitutional reforms in the Province. Government refrained from taking special measures until the activities of Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his associates and in particular the open and intensive preparation for an early conflict with Government created a situation of such grave menace to the peace of the Province, and of tribal areas as to make it impossible further to delay action.

His Excellency understands that Abdul Ghaffar Khan was in August last made responsible for leading the Congress Movement in the Province and that the volunteer organizations he controlled were specially recognised by the All-India Congress Committee as Congress Organisations. His Excellency desires me to make clear that his responsibilities for peace and order make it impossible for him to have any dealings with persons or organisations upon whom rests the responsibility for the activities outlined above.

"You have yourself been absent from India on the business of the Round Table Conference and in the light of the attitude which you have observed there His Excellency is unwilling to believe that you have personally any share in the responsibility for or that you approve of the recent activities of the Congress in the United Provinces and the N.-W. F. P. If this is so, he is willing to see you and to give you his views as to

the way in which you can best exert your influence to maintain the spirit of co-operation which intimated the proceedings of the Round Table Conference. But His Excellency feels bound to emphasize that he will not be prepared to discuss with you measures which the Government of India, with the full approval of His Majesty's Government, have found it necessary to adopt in Bengal, the United Provinces and the N.-W. F. P.

"These measures must in any case be kept in force until they have served the purpose for which they were imposed, namely preservation of law and order essential to good Government. On receipt of your reply His Excellency proposes to publish this correspondence."

The following is Mahatma Ji's rejoinder to the Viceroy's reply :

"I thank His Excellency for the wire in reply to mine of 29th instant. It grieves me for His Excellency has rejected in a manner hardly befitting his high position an advance made in the friendliest spirit. I had approached as a seeker wanting light on questions for which I desired to understand the Government version of very serious and extraordinary measures to which I made reference. Instead of appreciating my advance His Excellency has rejected it by asking me to repudiate my valued colleagues in advance and telling me that even if I became guilty of such dishonourable conduct and sought interview I could not even discuss these matters of vital importance to the Nation.

"In my opinion the constitutional issue dwindles into insignificance in the face of the Ordinances and acts which must, if not met with stubborn resistance, and in other demoralisation of the Nation. I hope the self-respecting Indian will run the risk of killing national spirit for a doubtful contingency of securing a consti-

tution to work which no Nation with stamina may be left. Let me also point out that as to the Frontier Province your telegram contains a narration of facts which on the face of them furnish me warrant for arrest of popular leaders passing extra-legal Ordinance making life and property utterly insecure and shooting unarmed peaceful crowds for daring to demonstrate against the arrest of their trusted leaders.

"If Khan Sahib Abdul Ghaffar Khan asserted the right to complete independence it was a natural claim and a claim made with impunity by the Congress at Lahore in 1929 and by me with energy put before the British Government in London. Moreover let me remind the Viceroy that despite the knowledge on the Government's part that the Congress mandate contained such a claim I was invited to attend the London Conference as the Congress delegate. Nor am I able to detect in a mere refusal to attend a darbar an offence warranting summary imprisonment. In refusing to attend if Khan Sahib was fomenting racial hatred it was undoubtedly regrettable. I have his own declarations to the contrary made to me, but assuming that he did foment racial hatred he was entitled to an open trial when he could have defended himself against the accusation.

"Regarding the United Provinces His Excellency is surely misinformed because there was not a no-rent campaign authorised by the Congress. But which negotiations were proceeding between Government and Congress representatives the time for collection of rents actually arrived and rents began to be demanded, Congressmen were, therefore, obliged to advise tenants to suspend payment pending the result of negotiations and Mr. Sherwani had offered on behalf of the Congress

to withdraw this advice if the authorities suspended collections pending negotiations. I venture to suggest that this is not a matter which can be dismissed so summarily as your wire has done. The controversy in the United Provinces is of long standing and involves well-being of millions of peasantry known to be economically ground down.

"Any Government jealous of the welfare of the masses in its charge would welcome voluntary co-operation of a big body like the Congress which admittedly exercises great influence over the masses and whose ambition is to serve them faithfully and let me add that I regard the withholding of payment of taxes as an inalienable, ancient and natural right of a people who have exhausted all other means of seeking freedom from an unbearable economic burden.

"I must repudiate suggestion that the Congress has the slightest desire to promote disorder in any shape or form. As to Bengal, the Congress is at one with the Government in condemning assassinations and should heartily co-operate with Government in measures that may be formed necessary to stamp out such crimes. But whilst the Congress would condemn in unmeasured terms method of terrorism, it can in no way associate itself with Government terrorism as is betrayed by the Bengal Ordinance and the acts done thereunder, but must resist within the limits of its prescribed creed of non-violence such measures of legalised Government terrorism. I heartily assent to the proposition laid down in your telegram that co-operation must be mutual. But your telegram leads me irresistibly to the conclusion that His Excellency demands co-operation from the Congress without returning any on behalf of Government.

"I can read in now other way his peremptory refusal to discuss these matters which as I have endeavoured to show have at least two sides. The popular side I have put as I understand it, but before committing to myself to a definite judgment. I was anxious to understand the other, that in, the Government side and then tender my advice to the Congress. With reference to the last para of your telegram I may not repudiate moral liability for the actions of my colleagues whether in the Frontier Province or United Provinces but I confess that I was ignorant of the detailed actions and activities of my colleagues whilst I was absent from India, and it was because it was necessary for me to advise and guide the Working Committee of the Congress and in order to complete my knowledge I sought with an open mind and with the best of intentions an interview with His Excellency and deliberately asked for his guidance.

"I cannot conceal from His Excellency my opinion that the reply he has condescended to send was hardly a return for my friendly and well-meant approach. And if it is not yet too late I would ask His Excellency to reconsider his decision and see me as a friend without imposing any condition whatsoever as to the scope or subject of discussion and I on my part can promise that I would study with an open mind all the facts that he might put before me. I would unhesitatingly and willingly go to the respective provinces and with the aid of the authorities study both sides of the question and if I came to the conclusion after such a study that the people were in the wrong and that the Working Committee including myself who misled as to the correct position and that the Government was right, I should have no hesitation whatsoever in making that open confession and guiding the Congress accordingly.

"Along with my desire and willingness to co-operate with the Government I must place my limitations before His Excellency. Non-violence is my absolute creed. I believe that civil disobedience is not only the natural right of a people especially when they have no effective voice in their own Government but that it also is an effective substitute for violence or armed rebellion.

"I can never, therefore, deny my creed. In pursuance thereof and on the strength of uncontradicted reports supported by the recent activities of the Government of India to the effect that there may be no other opportunity for me to guide the public, the Working Committee has accepted my advice and passed a resolution tentatively sketching a plan of civil disobedience. I am sending herewith the text of the resolution. If His Excellency thinks it worth-while to see me, the operation of the resolution will be suspended pending over discussion in the hope that it may result in the resolution being finally given up. I admit that the correspondence between His Excellency and myself is of such grave importance as not to brook delay in publication. I am, therefore, sending my telegram, your reply, this rejoinder and the Working Committee's resolution for publication."

The Congress Working Committee in its meeting held on June 12-13, 1934 at Wardha asked the Acting Chairman to draw the attention of the Government to the discrepancy in their communique withdrawing notifications against Congress organizations. The Acting Chairman accordingly sent the following telegram to the Secretary, Home Department, Simla :—"The Working Committee, I. N. C., has asked me to draw the Government's attention to the discrepancy in the Communique removing the ban on Congress organisations.

The communique withdraws notification declaring the various constituent parts of the Congress organisation unlawful. But it continues the notification against Red Shirt organizations as if they were not part of the Congress. I am to draw the attention of Government that by Red Shirt organization are meant *Khudai Khidmatgars.* They are since August 1931 part of the Congress, pledged to its creed and constitution and subject to its discipline. Their representatives have accepted A.I.C.C. resolution suspending civil resistance. My Committee will be obliged if you would kindly inform me whether in spite of their acceptance of Congress decision they remain unlawful organisations."

The following reply was received by the Acting Chairman from the Home Department, Government of India :—"I have received your telegram of twelfth instant and in reply am desired to say that the Government of India was aware that the N. W. F. Provincial Jirga, which was the name made which the red shirt organization previously known as Afghan Jirga or *Khudai Khidmatgar* was working in its latest stages, was described as a part of the Congress Organization. The record of its activities, however, is such that the Government do not intend to withdraw the notifications declaring it and its branches to be unlawful."

Thus for the Government the Red Shirts are always red in tooth and claw, though they may be green for the Congress. Subsequent history of the *Khudai Khidmatgars,* when the Congress swept the polls in seven provinces, has already been described. Closely dogging on heels came the Second World War and the Congress resignations as a protest against the war aims of Great Britain. In 1942 Mahatma Gandhi led the Congress into a do-or-die struggle for independence, and

all the Congress leaders, including Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, found themselves behind the bars. Most of the Red Shirts have been longed removed from the scenes of political activity. Muslim League, taking advantage of Congress difficulties, have formed a number of puppet ministries with the official support. Sardar Aurangzebe Khan is the League spearhead in the Frontier. *Had he* permitted the Congress M. L. A.'s, now safely lodged in prisons, to attend the Assembly meeting, his Ministry would have been swept off their feet. Nor has he accepted the challenge of Dr. Khan Sahib to resign, along with all his back-benchers, and seek re-election.

Nationalism to-day is at its lowest ebb in the country of Hindustan. While Mr. Jinnah is having quite an easy time on the Malabar Hill, the Congress leaders are safe in their cells. The Frontier Gandhi is in jail and the Red Shirt romances no more splash the pages of the dailies. Mahatma Gandhi is brooding in the Aga Khan's palace, and the goddess of Democracy in strolling in the gutters.

CHAPTER VIII

SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME

THE progressive political groups condemn root and branch the present lack of policy on the Frontier. We have to meet an enormous expenditure. And yet what is the progress? The programme of peaceful penetration moves at a snail's pace, if it moves at all. The policy must be such as would attract the maximum support from politically-minded sections of India. "Few would advocate," says Sir William Barton, "a policy of complete disarmament and the administration of tribal country up to the Durand Line. The cost would probably run into twenty or thirty million sterling. The loss of life would be heavy; there would be a series of campaigns extending over several years. Most of the Indian army would be absorbed in the operations; to attempt this in the present international situation would be sheer insanity. The cost of holding the country down after conquest and of administering it, even if indirect methods were adopted, would probably be at least double the heavy expenditure of to-day, there would be practically no revenue. The British Government would have to assume a new responsibility—to protect its disarmed tribes from their neighbours on the other side of the Durand Line. Apart from the almost insuperable difficulties of such a policy there is the fact that it would alienate still further the Moslems of India and of the Frontier Province. It might have serious repercussions in Afghanistan."

The Frontier problem is largely economic. The

tribes have to supplement their resources by raiding the plains. British as well as Afghan villages are within raiding distance of the tribal areas. But border crime is more chronic in India than in Afghanistan. Electrified barbed wire is no solution. We must develop the material resources of the tribes. Progress is hampered by feuds and lawlessness. A large proportion of tribal capital is invested in rifles. Much of the land is left fallow. Improvement in material conditions is unquestionably an essential element in a policy of peaceful penetration. The standard of living of the tribes must be raised. Government must be prepared to spend money in order to improve the economic prospects of the tribesmen. It would be better spent in this way than on a useless campaign. There is scope for the expansion of agriculture. Loans of money may be advanced for constructing new fields. Tanks should be built for the storage of water. Fruits of fine quality may be grown almost anywhere in the Frontier Hills. Grapes, apples, peaches, apricots, figs, etc. grow wonderfully. The demand for fruit in India is insatiable. The fruits grown by the Pathan tribesmen can easily be marketed in the cities of India. There would be an equally valuable market for vegetables. Refrigerating vans are now available on Indian trains. Fruit and flowers from the Frontier can easily be sent to any part of India. The preparation of dried fruit can become a flourishing industry in the border hills. The surplus energy of the hill population can also be put to other uses. Technical Schools may be opened for their benefit. Pathans are intelligent folk. They make good mechanics and motor drivers. Cottage industries may be organized on a commercial basis. There are many places on the Frontier where electric current can be

produced by the use of water. On the Malakand there is a powerful hydro-electric installation where current is very cheaply produced. Electric current can also be generated on the Kabul River for Mohmand country and Tirah. Power created on the Gumal River can brighten the life of Mahsuds. Wool can be taken from Afghanistan and woven into cloth. Weaving of blankets and carpets might prove successful.

The Assistant Political Officers as a class should be forthwith eliminated. As Dr. Khan Sahib told the Central Legislative Assembly at Simla in September 1935, they are responsible for much of the trouble on the border. They are mostly corrupt and create trouble because it gives them opportunities for making money. Some such officers have piled up fortunes by mischief-making. The vested interests of the Assistant Political Officers make reforms difficult. Choice of allowance-holders is not always just. Their value is discounted by the jealousy caused by the selection made. What is wanted is a strong group of chiefs really representative of the tribes. The formation of some sort of tribal republic is an absolute necessity. Under the National Government not the centre, the Indian army could absorb several thousand men from the Frontier tribes. A really sound scheme of primary education should be established in the hills. A good beginning should also be made forthwith in providing medical relief. Money spent in this direction is very much worth while. A rough and ready system of tribal government can be launched forthwith.

"In facing the question," says Sir William Barton, "Indian politicians both on the Frontier itself and at Delhi should be generous enough to stress lightly those aspects of Frontier administration in which the British

have not been successful. Rather let them place to the credit of Britain the immunity from invasion India has enjoyed for over a century, a record equalled only by the Moguls in the last thousand years. Britain has paid the price of failure with the blood of thousands of her sons. Nevertheless the foundations of a firm and lasting structure have been laid ; let Indian help *to complete* the building. It will rest with them to convince the Pathan that Delhi has more to offer him than Kabul." We have no doubt that, when the National Government is established at Delhi, the *Karachi* Charter of the Congress will be applied to the Frontier. Swaraj as conceived by the Congress would include real economic freedom of the masses. The Congress has declared that the constitution will be acceptable to it unless it provides or enables the Swaraj Government to provide for :

(1) Freedom of expression, association and meeting.
(2) Freedom of religion.
(3) Protection of all cultures and languages.
(4) All citizens shall be equal before the law.
(5) No disability in employment or trade or profession on account of religion, caste or creed.
(6) Equal rights and duties for all in regard to public wells, schools etc.
(7) All to have right to bear arms in accordance with regulations.
(8) No person to be deprived of property or liberty except in accordance with law.
(9) Religious neutrality of State.
(10) Adult Suffrage.
(11) Free compulsory primary education.
(12) No titles to be conferred.

(13) Capital punishment to be abolished.
(14) Freedom of movement for every citizen of India and right to settle and acquire property in any part thereof, and equal protection of law.
(15) Proper standard of life for industrial workers and suitable machinery for settlement of disputes between employers and workers and protection against old age, sickness, etc.
(16) All labour to be free from conditions of serfdom.
(17) Special protection of women workers.
(18) Children not to be employed in mines and factories.
(19) Rights of peasants and workers to form Unions.
(20) Reform of system of land revenue and tenure and rent, exempting rent and revenue for uneconomical holdings and reduction of dues payable for smaller holdings.
(21) Inheritance tax on graduated scale.
(22) Reduction of military expenditure by at least half.
(23) No servant of State ordinarily to be paid above Rs. 500 per month.
(24) Abolition of salt tax.
(25) Protection of indigenous cloth against competition of foreign cloth.
(26) Total prohibition of intoxicating drinks and drugs.
(27) Currency and exchange to be in national interest.

(28) Nationalisation of key industries and services, railways, etc.

(29) Relief of agricultural indebtedness and control of usury.

(30) Military training for citizens.

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QUOTATIONS

"It is instinctive in our minds when the frontier of India is mentioned, to think of the 'North-West Frontier' as the only frontier worthy of the name...... This North-West Frontier, the land which was long the home of earlier Hindus and Buddhists, now the hunting ground of the Sons of the Prophet, is full of the strange relics of the past that can hardly yet be peaceably explored." —Lt. Genl. Sir George Macmunn.

"There is no caste in border society ; every Pathan thinks himself as good as another. In fact the political climate of the Frontier is healthier for the delicate plant of democracy than anywhere else in India."

—Sir William Barton.

"The North-West Frontier is not only the Frontier of India ; it is an international frontier of the first importance from the military point of view for the whole Empire." —Simon Commission.

GANDHI'S FIGHT FOR FREEDOM

1942

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BY

Prof. GHEEWALA, ARTHURMOUR, EDGER SNOW, RT. HON. SRINIVASA SASTRI, KALI NATH RAY.

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